

AD 648317

RESEARCH PAPER P-279

AMERICAN POLICY-MAKING PRACTICES AND  
THE ORIGINS OF THE U.S. COMMITMENT  
TO THE WEST BERLIN ENCLAVE

Paul H. Johnstone

September 1966



INSTITUTE FOR DEFENSE ANALYSES  
WEAPONS SYSTEMS EVALUATION DIVISION

## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
BACKGROUND AND ENVIRONMENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIFIC POLICIES CONCERNING BERLIN . . . . .	7
The Political-Military Dichotomy . . . . .	7
Problems of Coordination at the National Level . . . . .	8
Isolation of Post-War Planning from Strategic Planning and Operations -- Short-Term Needs versus Long-Term Objectives . . . . .	11
The Military-Political Dichotomy and Control of Civil Government in Occupied Areas . . . . .	13
Hatred of Germany and Lack of Historical Perspective. .	17
Conflict between the Need to Plan and the Political Danger in Planning . . . . .	18
Readiness of Russians and British to Shape Military Strategy to Political Ends -- Unreadiness of USA . . .	19
THE MAJOR "DECISION" - DEVELOPMENT OF FORMAL U.S. COMMIT- MENTS ON ZONAL ARRANGEMENTS IN GERMANY . . . . .	21
The Policy Decision and the Operational or Enforcing Decisions . . . . .	21
Preliminary Need to Develop a Firm National Policy . .	22
The Better British Staff Procedures . . . . .	24
Early Anglo-American Differences on Occupation Policy .	35
Moscow, Teheran, Cairo and Beginnings of the EAC . . .	36
American Disarray Concerning the EAC . . . . .	39
EAC Moves Toward Zonal Agreement while the U.S. Abstains . . . . .	45
Belated Presentation of Roosevelt's Zone Ideas . . . .	46
The Presidential Preoccupation with a Northwest Zone. .	48
Different Perspectives Then and Now . . . . .	50
Soviet Proposal for Berlin Administration Accepted . .	53

The Basic Settlement of Northwest Zone Controversy . .	54
The Protocol of 12 September 1944 . . . . .	54
The "Morgenthau Plan" and the Deal for the Northwest Zone . . . . .	56
The Mechanism of the Octagon Agreement on Zones . . . .	58
Second Stage of the Anglo-American Hassle . . . . .	60
The Russian Comment on Access Rights . . . . .	61
The Zonal Agreements Finally Officially Approved . . .	63
ANTICLIMAX - THE IMPLEMENTING DECISIONS . . . . .	65
The Nature of the Issue after Approval of the EAC Protocol . . . . .	65
The Beginning Breach between East and West . . . . .	67
The Decision Not to Try to Take Berlin . . . . .	72
The Redoubt That Never Was . . . . .	77
British and American Ideas on the Value of Berlin . . .	79
Military Resolution of Issues through Default of Political Authorities . . . . .	83
The Matter of Arranging Operational Contact with the Russians . . . . .	84
THE DECISION TO RETIRE TO THE AGREED ZONES . . . . .	91
Churchill Seeks to Exploit Tactical Position of Western Forces . . . . .	95
Truman's First Rebuff of Churchill's Proposal . . . . .	97
Hopkins to Moscow . . . . .	97
Hopkins Transmits Eisenhower Views to Truman . . . . .	99
Churchill Renews Campaign to Delay Withdrawal . . . . .	100
The Last Phase -- Agreements on Movements of Troops . .	103
SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS . . . . .	105

## I. INTRODUCTION

This is a study of our experience in security policy making more than 20 years ago that seems pertinent to current considerations for two reasons. First, recent experience has demonstrated repeatedly that the way in which national security policies are formulated and strategic decisions are made affects seriously the functioning and the desirable configuration of the military command system. Such policy formulation and strategic decision making are in fact often not clearly distinguishable from military command and control -- sometimes not distinguishable even in lower echelon functions. Study of the workings of military command systems therefore involves consideration of the form and process of national security policy formulation and strategic decision making.

The second reason why the origin of our Berlin predicament seems pertinent to present considerations is that it illustrates a recurrent problem of security policy making which we have not yet solved, and which we face today -- perhaps with as many unforeseen future results -- as we faced in the matter of Berlin a generation ago. This is the problem of handling current, recognized difficulties without unwittingly exposing or committing ourselves to greater or longer lasting burdens or to problems or dangers not yet recognized, by the expedient acts we undertake to meet today's needs. The inherent difficulty of the Berlin problem lies in the fact that in the World War II era we had somehow got ourselves into a position where our interests and prestige were committed to a militarily indefensible position.

Berlin itself was of course only a part of the total German problem. But it has always been the exposed position whose

tactical vulnerability the Communist World has sought to exploit, not just for Berlin alone, but as a part of and perhaps a key to the total German problem. We have managed to maintain the Western position substantially intact in West Berlin if not in all of Berlin for over twenty years, and we expect to remain. But it is a position which is at a serious disadvantage tactically, ultimately defensible only by enlargement of the issue beyond the bounds of Berlin itself, and for this reason one would hardly choose if indeed he had a choice.

Avoidance of commitment to exposed and vulnerable positions is supposed to be a regular preoccupation of both military and political strategy. It will be seen, in the account that follows, that there were a great many contributing factors that caused us eventually to end up in the unwanted and unforeseen Berlin dilemma in which we finally found ourselves. Some were circumstantial and largely beyond our control. But others were related to the form, process, and doctrinal assumptions which shaped our decisions and determined our actions; and it should be within our power to improve performance in these matters.

It is a part of the essence of military professionalism to foresee the second-stage effects of a given deployment, to perceive the logistic and tactical complications of seemingly simple military maneuvers, to look behind the feint to see the greater and perhaps different form of danger concealed in another quarter, to grasp the dynamic nature of mortal struggle and expect completed actions to alter the situation and the balance of forces. In almost all forms of competitive activity -- in chess, in politics, in international dealings as well as in single battles or entire wars -- competent determination of strategy and tactics calls for a judicious balance of consideration for immediate and secondary factors, for short-term pressures and long-term interests. This is perhaps more difficult to achieve in the political than in the military sphere. But it is even more important, because it embraces the ends for which the military is only the means.

The American (and Western) establishment in West Berlin constitutes a very extreme example of unintended commitment to an exposed and vulnerable position. The values placed at risk in this situation include not only the city itself and the forces stationed there; they are much greater because the vulnerability of the tripartite Western Allies in Berlin invests the whole NATO Alliance with a political vulnerability it would not otherwise have and that extends beyond Berlin itself.

It could not be proved, of course, that any conceivable improvement of the doctrines and procedures governing our policy formulation and decision making in the WWII era would surely have led to a more advantageous or even to substantially different arrangements in Germany than those that eventuated in fact. This involves the kind of hypothetical question to which there is never a sure answer. But it would not seem reasonable to many people that efficiency of policy making and decision processes had no effect upon results. How different the results in this case might have been had different practices been followed is a hypothetical question each reader will answer according to his judgment of an almost endless range of variables that extend well beyond the factors represented by these practices per se.

Various aspects of the origins of our Berlin predicament have been the subject of previous studies. This paper is indebted to several of these,<sup>1</sup> as well as to original documentary and published source materials and to memoirs of participants.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mr. William M. Franklin, Director of the Historical Office of the Department of State, and one of the editors of pertinent volumes in the Foreign Relations of the United States, has written the best unclassified general article on the subject, "Zonal Boundaries and Access to Berlin," in World Politics, January 1963, pp. 1-31. A good early account of a part of the events, by one of the lower echelon participants, (who was evidently not aware at that time, nor later at the time of his writing, of important acts and considerations at other places and echelons that directly affected his duties) is Philip E. (footnote continued on following page)

This paper differs from the previous studies in that it concentrates upon the problems and processes prominent in the development of Berlin policy a quarter of a century ago that, in the recent past, have been the subject of special concern in instances of formulation of national security policy and in strategic decision making.

The problems and processes of current concern that were also prominent in the original development of our Berlin predicament may be summarized in the following groupings:

a. Coordination of political and military considerations.

This comprehends not only the means of such coordination once the need for it is recognized, but also the sensitivity to perceive the presence of both elements in a single issue; not only in the making of decisions concerning policies, but in developing plans and proposals for specific actions to implement them.

b. Coordination and adjustment of overlapping jurisdictions.

This related mainly to State and War Departments then, mainly to State and Defense, and sometimes CIA, today; but always

---

Mosely, "The Occupation of Germany: New Light in How the Zones Were Drawn," first published in Foreign Affairs XXVIII, 4 (July 1950) pp. 580-604, later as Chapter 6 of The Kremlin and World Politics (New York, 1960). Less concentrated upon Berlin or Zonal boundaries than these, but excellent as a general background study of the making of our policy toward post-war Germany, is John L. Snell's Wartime Origins of the East-West Dilemma Over Germany, (New Orleans, La., 1959). Some of the volumes in the series, The U.S. Army In World War II, especially Maurice Matloff, Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1943-44, (1959) and Forrest C. Pogue, The Supreme Command, (1954) are valuable in their treatment of certain episodes. Jean Edward Smith's monograph, The Defense of Berlin, (Baltimore, 1963) is the most comprehensive published study of the entire subject of the Berlin problem, from its origins during the war to 1963. Its interpretation of some events, however, reflects a controversial point of view. Laszlo Hadik's The Berlin Question/A Historical Summary, (IDA, 1963) is a summary account based largely on newspaper sources, valuable for using German news sources not drawn upon by others. Finally, some valuable but often neglected background is supplied by [Harley A. Notter], Post-War Foreign Policy Preparation, 1939-45, (Department of State Publication No. 3580, 1950). These as well as other materials used in this study will be cited where citation is appropriate.

involving the final authority of the White House. This commonly reflects, in an institutional dimension, problems of political-military coordination under a.

c. Effectiveness of established staff procedures, command channels, and lines of subordination, and appropriate use thereof. Do established means and procedures accomplish what they are supposed to accomplish? Are they used? adequate? ignored? found wanting?

d. Reconciliation of short-term needs and long-range goals. As in a above, recognition of the presence of both elements in a single issue, as well as means of dealing with them once both are recognized, is an important part of the problem. "Short term" often means "military operational;" "long range" often means "indirect political."

The development of our commitment to the West Berlin enclave will be examined with these problem areas in mind.



## II. BACKGROUND AND ENVIRONMENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIFIC POLICIES CONCERNING BERLIN

### A. THE POLITICAL-MILITARY DICHOTOMY

At the time we entered World War II, the frequently convenient dichotomy dividing military from political was widely accepted in America -- by high and low, by military and civilian -- as if it were a literally true natural classification, in the sense that "political" and "military" represented mutually exclusive phenomena and the phenomena of war and peace were by nature either one or the other but not both. A bold statement of this would no doubt have been denied by almost everyone. But if in theory and in words it might be acknowledged occasionally that war was merely the conduct of politics by means of organized violence, when it came to deeds we generally and characteristically acted as if military and political matters were separate and mutually exclusive. It was a part of our national character, shared by almost everyone.

Among our statesmen and diplomats, the tendency was to act in accordance with a kind of implicit doctrine that peace was for statesmen and diplomats, war for soldiers; that military matters should never intrude in politics nor politics in the conduct of war; that going to war was a confession politics had failed; and that when war ended politics began again and military considerations ceased to be a consideration.

Our long-standing national tradition of separating our professional soldiers from the conduct of our domestic political affairs produced an American officer corps which by dint of long indoctrination was, in the words of the official historian of

the Operations Division of the War Department, "extremely circumspect, being unwilling that discussion or action on military questions should be entangled unnecessarily with discussion or action on other matters of national policy." Their practical experience, moreover, in the years before Pearl Harbor, had reinforced "the discipline in which they had been schooled; that is, of proceeding on the assumption that the formulation and execution of the military plans of the United States could be segregated in administrative practice from staff work on other aspects of national policy."<sup>1</sup>

As soon as the U.S. entered the war, however, American staff officers began their education in methods of conducting a great war within a coalition of great powers. Even during a war, the President, like the Prime Minister, could not determine military strategy solely on the basis of military advice from military professionals. There were other considerations, and there was also related action in nonmilitary channels. Then the Darlan deal in North Africa illustrated dramatically the political implications even of actions dictated by military necessity. Less dramatically, but no less convincingly, it gradually became apparent that in every major strategic decision, political considerations of one or another kind were important, and they were often dominant.

#### B. PROBLEMS OF COORDINATION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

By 1943, this much was widely and explicitly recognized in principle. But we never achieved in practice the effective coordination of political and military considerations in strategic planning that was achieved by the British Chiefs of Staff and the War Cabinet. This was noticed, somewhat enviously, by American military men, among them Generals Marshall and Wedemeyer.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ray S. Cline, Washington Command Post: The Operations Division, (OCMH, Washington, D. C., 1951), p. 312.

Whereas the British had a broad structure of established inter-departmental committees on which to base the coordination of military and political considerations, the U.S. Chiefs of Staff were dependent almost exclusively on the President himself.<sup>1</sup> This was a grossly inadequate channel for political inputs to military planning not only because it restricted the volume of information almost always, and frequently was not available at all; but also because, being at such a high echelon, it tended to feed political inputs into the military planning process at a stage too late to be very efficient.

Likewise, the flow of military information into the national level policy decision process was comparably bottlenecked by the same lack of established and broadly based coordinating machinery. Because political inputs could generally be coordinated with military considerations into strategic decisions only at the White House level, it was important that professional military advice flow freely into the White House. But liaison between the military staffs and the White House was carried out almost entirely by a few high officials. These consisted mainly, on the military side, of the Chiefs of Staff, who sometimes dealt directly with the President, at other times indirectly with Presidential aides Harry Hopkins or James Byrnes, but perhaps most commonly through the Presidential Chief of Staff Admiral Leahy. In addition, the Service Secretaries handled grave matters, dealing directly with the President sometimes, at other times with his aides. Within the White House staff, the lack of any systematic organization was notorious. According to the official historian:

The President received a professional interpretation of current military operations only when he specifically asked for one or ... when General Marshall felt obliged to submit one, even without being asked .... The Senior Army

---

<sup>1</sup> Cline, Washington Command Post, chapter on "Military Planning and Foreign Affairs," pp. 312-332.

officer on duty in the White House Map Room was in a position sometimes to explain to the President and his staff the latest reports, and thus to check the circulation of vague ideas and misconceptions .... But though they could help ... [they] could not compensate for the fact that during most of the war the President formed his impression and made his decisions on military matters, as on all others, without the benefit of fully systematic departmental staff work.

... the President often had someone on his staff prepare a message on military operations, or revise a draft message prepared either in the Joint Staff or by one of the Service staffs. The phrasing of such a message could often involve important changes in American military plans, and General Marshall, Admiral King, and General Arnold were very anxious to see the final draft before it was dispatched so that, when necessary, they could call attention to the military consequences ....<sup>1</sup>

Concerning the American tendency to separate military matters from political concerns, the official British historian of grand strategy in World War II made this observation:

Attention has often been focused on the different attitudes of the British and American military authorities to the relation between diplomatic and military affairs. Some American writers, in reaction against the American tradition, have indeed claimed too much for the British system. But certainly it allowed for regular consultation between the diplomatic and military interests, whereas the American did not. The U.S. Army in particular, from Marshall downwards, ignored--and deliberately--the diplomatic future. 'The Americans,' an American historian has written [William Hardy McNeill, in America, Britain and Russia: Their Co-operation and Conflict, 1941-46. (Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1953, p. 750)], 'tended to separate military from political ends by an all but impassable barrier. Indeed, American generals often seemed to regard war as a game after which, when it had been won and lost, the players would disperse and go home.' The effects of such an attitude were particularly serious in Europe ....<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Cline, Washington Command Post, pp. 314-315.

<sup>2</sup> John Ehrman, Grand Strategy, VI, October 1944-August 1945, being a part of History of the Second World War, United Kingdom Military Series, ed. by J.R.M. Butler, (Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1956), p. 348.

C. ISOLATION OF POST-WAR PLANNING FROM STRATEGIC PLANNING AND OPERATIONS -- SHORT-TERM NEEDS VERSUS LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES

Planning for the peace that was to follow the war began early. It observed completely the dichotomy separating the political from the military. Although ambitious in scope, and for a time enjoying high auspices, in the end it was largely ignored when decisions concerning peace terms and post-war arrangements finally were made. This was largely because these decisions were made, when they were made, on the basis of operational considerations. And operational matters generally were considered unrelated to long-term objectives by those who did the long-term planning.

Almost two years before we entered the war -- on 27 December 1939 -- Secretary of State Cordell Hull established a "committee on problems of peace and reconstruction: in recognition of the need to be prepared to deal with the problems likely to arise from the war begun that September by the Nazi invasion of Poland." At first the committee was staffed entirely by senior officers of the Department of State. But on 8 January 1940 it was given interdepartmental status, was formally named the "Advisory Committee on Problems of Foreign Relations," and was chaired by Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles (who enjoyed more Presidential confidence than the Secretary himself). During 1940, subcommittees were organized with support and membership drawn from the Departments of Treasury, Agriculture, and Commerce, and initial studies made on such subjects as "Consequences to the U.S. of a Possible German Victory." In November 1940 a new division was established within the Department of State -- the Division of Special Research -- to provide staff support for an enlarged program of research and policy studies concerning anticipated post-war problems. This division was staffed in part by nationally recognized scholars brought in from the academic world and in part by Foreign Service officers.

In May of 1941 Congress authorized the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations to make a study of post-war problems.

Very soon after the U.S. entered the war, Secretary of State Hull recommended to the President that he establish -- essentially as a successor to the Advisory Committee on Foreign Relations -- an Advisory Committee on Post-War Foreign Policy. This recommendation was approved, and the Advisory Committee on Post-War Foreign Policy had its first meeting on 12 February 1942. Membership varied, but it came soon to include 11 State Department officials, one representative each from the JCS, the War, Navy and four other regular departments and from one war-time and one independent agency, plus three from the White House staff, one from the Library of Congress, and finally ten public members, five Senators, and three Representatives. There were subsidiary committee memberships, and the committee as a whole was supported by the newly created Division of Special Research of the State Department. A comprehensive series of studies was prepared concerning the terms of peace and post-war policies on such subjects as armistice terms, boundaries, reparations, occupation, economic rehabilitation, provisional governments, post-war international organization, etc.<sup>1</sup>

For present purposes, the important thing to note is that all this planning for the post-war world took place in complete isolation from planning the strategy of the war. The understanding developed, implicit and unquestioned, that the President would work with the JCS to win the war -- conferring from time to time with Churchill and the Combined Chiefs of Staff, and with Stalin -- while as a parallel but separate effort, the Department of State would formulate plans for the post-war settlement.

---

<sup>1</sup>[Notter], Post-War Foreign Policy Preparation, pp. 20-157.

Thus, the traditional dichotomy of political versus military, or war versus peace, took on, in the context of planning for the settlement, the dichotomy of winning the war versus planning the peace.<sup>1</sup>

D. THE MILITARY-POLITICAL DICHOTOMY AND CONTROL OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT IN OCCUPIED AREAS

A further and important instance of the tendency to try to keep political and military matters clearly separate from each other was in our first approach to civil government of occupied areas. The popular political climate prevailing at the time of our entry into World War II tended to regard any participation of the military in political affairs with suspicion. This issue arose early in the war, first in mid-1942 when moves were made to establish a School of Military Government at the University of Virginia to train civil affairs officers. A little later it was continued when the real problem arose of governing occupied areas in North Africa in connection with Operation TORCH.

The School of Military Government came under attack almost immediately, mainly on the basis of a doctrinal belief that liberated areas should be under civilian control, with civil government by civilians. Much of the ardor for this view reflected a widely held fear among American liberals that military control would be generally unfriendly to democratic ideas of government and to liberal elements among the population of the areas to be liberated. This seemed an important issue to many, who looked upon the matter in the light of their understanding of the war as a crusade against Nazi "militarism." The issue became the subject of Cabinet meeting discussions, and the President for a time sided with the popular suspicion of the military in their prospective role of governors of liberated areas. On 29 October 1942, becoming interested in some of the

---

<sup>1</sup> This separation has been previously noted by Franklin, "Zonal Boundaries and Access to Berlin," p. 2.

charges, President Roosevelt wrote the Secretary of War that "the governing of occupied territories may be of many kinds, but in most instances it is a civilian task ...." Provost Marshal General Gullion was for months kept constantly on the defensive by critics who charged that military government of occupied territories would inevitably be "militaristic," and "imperialistic," or otherwise socially reactionary. Secretary of War Stimson defended the Charlottesville School in Cabinet meetings, trying to show (in the words of his diary) "how ridiculous was the proposition that we were trying to train Army officers for proconsular duties after the war was over." He also recorded in his diary that as early as 20 November 1942 the President was expressing his unhappiness in Cabinet meetings with military "interference" in civil affairs in occupied territories. A Civilian Advisory Board on civil government in occupied areas was set up, headed by Assistant Secretary of the Interior Oscar Chapman (nothing important is known to have come from it), and on 8 February 1943 Jonathan Daniels, then Special Assistant to the President, proposed in a memo to the President to settle the controversy by establishing a nonmilitary "Occupational Authority" to supervise any American occupation and to coordinate the operations of various Federal Departments and agencies engaged in such occupation.<sup>1</sup> Nothing came of this suggestion either; but it indicates the temper of the times.

The Army involvement in civil affairs in North Africa in Operation TORCH was associated in the public mind with the Darlan Deal. The Darlan Deal, although it grew out of an original Roosevelt decision, and was approved by both Secretary Hull and the State Department representative on the spot, was from the early days of the North African landings associated with the Army, and was interpreted by much of the American

---

<sup>1</sup> Harry L. Coles and Albert K. Weinberg, Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors, (OCMH, Washington, D. C. 1964), pp. 10-29.



public, who understood little of the hard realities of the situation, as an unsavory compromise of political principle. This tended to harden the public resistance to military control of civil government in occupied areas.

In any event, about 1 November 1942 the Combined Chiefs of Staff decided to let civil agencies handle all economic matters in North Africa. State was given the leading role, assigned to coordinate efforts of a proliferation of agencies that soon included the Office of Lend-Lease Administration (OLLA), the Board of Economic Warfare (BEW), the War Shipping Administration (WSA), and the Red Cross. On 1 December 1942, a North African Economic Board was set up, under State Department auspices, to coordinate these activities, with State Department representatives Robert Murphy and Major General Gale as joint chairmen. At the Washington end, a series of interagency coordinating committees was established with membership drawn from the Departments of State, War, and Agriculture, OLLA, BEW, the Combined Shipping Board, and the British Embassy. The division of authority involved in all of these cumbersome arrangements was repeatedly bothersome to General Eisenhower, because direct control and prompt responsiveness were lost with respect to many matters of vital concern in this area where military operations were continuing.

Although the administrative confusion became a lively issue within the Government, no basic changes were made immediately. Some of the problems were brought about, according to Stimson's diary, by occasional direct and personal interventions by the President in comparatively small matters. Nevertheless, although no changes were immediately made in the pressing problems of North Africa, early in 1943 Secretary of War Stimson established a Civil Affairs Division (CAD) in the War Department, with the concurrence of Secretary of State Hull. The CAD was put under the direction of Major General Hildring, who

reported to Assistant Secretary of War McCloy. McCloy also became Chairman of the Combined Civil Affairs Committee (CCAC) of the Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS).

Meanwhile the administrative confusion in North Africa continued, became more intense and more noticeable. During this phase of the war, President Roosevelt's attitude seems to have vacillated between favoring military government and civil authorities. On 2 January 1943 he wrote to General Eisenhower and his political advisor, Robert Murphy: "I feel very strongly that, in view of the fact that in North Africa we have a military occupation, our CG [Commanding General] has complete control of all affairs, both civil and military." A few weeks later, during the first stages of the invasion of Italy, he made one final attempt to give to State the administrative direction of all civil affairs. But by November 1943 he was converted fully to military government, and directed the War Department to assume full responsibility for civil affairs in liberated areas and to take over all initial dealings with the French.<sup>1</sup>

This episode does not directly concern Berlin. It is summarized briefly here to illustrate further the general disposition to regard things as either military or political, but not both. From this first long reluctance to give the Army authority to administer civil affairs, even in the immediate support areas of the fighting in North Africa -- because civil affairs were civil affairs and as such were of no proper concern of the military -- the President after some wavering reversed himself almost completely beginning late in 1943. From then on, as will be seen later, he repeatedly turned over to the military, for resolution on the basis of military considerations alone, issues that involved important and far-reaching political implications.

---

<sup>1</sup> Coles and Weinberg, Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors, pp. 30-69; Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, On Active Service in Peace and War (New York, 1947), pp. 553-560. The quote from the FDR letter of 2 January 1943 is from Robert Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors (Garden City, New York, 1964), p. 145.

#### E. HATRED OF GERMANY AND LACK OF HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Another factor of background attitudes is important enough to deserve mention. One was the popular hatred of Germany and Germans, combined with a predisposition not to recognize the sometimes ephemeral nature of current conditions and alignments.

It has often been observed that if wars are to be waged effectively by citizen armies, the populace must be stirred up to regard the war as a crusade against evil. This was largely the feeling of the people of the U.S. and Britain, and of Russia too, and it seems to have been shared by the Allied leaders -- Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin. It was widely believed, especially in the U.S., that the Germans constituted a special menace to peace and to mankind because of their peculiar national character.<sup>1</sup> The feature of this that is significant to our present concern is that this preoccupation with the inherent villainy of Germany tended, in a period of critical decision making concerning post-war Germany, to blind us from the consideration that in another time and another situation we might be imperiled, not by Germany, but from another quarter. It did not comparably blind those in power in Britain and Russia, specifically Churchill and Eden and Stalin. A sense of history, a long perspective that as a matter of course assumed the transient character of current alignments and balance of power might have had great practical value.

The potential peril of a post-World War II future that seems to have preoccupied President Roosevelt most was the possibility of another Hitler. He and Churchill agreed, even before the U.S. entered the war, that they could not deal with Hitler and that they wanted to avoid providing any future Hitlers with a story of Germany's betrayal by traitors within.

---

<sup>1</sup> Snell, Wartime Origins of the East-West Dilemma Over Germany, devotes a chapter--"The Spirit of the Times, 1939-1945"--pp. 1-13, to describing and documenting this mood.

For this reason they regarded anything like President Wilson's Fourteen Points as a mistake, and as early as August 1941 in the Atlantic Charter gave out the Four Freedoms -- which were a publicity handout, not a basis for negotiations. This line of reasoning was largely responsible for the Casablanca announcement of a policy of Unconditional Surrender (which Churchill accepted reluctantly and Stalin did not like).

F. CONFLICT BETWEEN THE NEED TO PLAN AND THE POLITICAL DANGER IN PLANNING

The implication of the Unconditional Surrender policy not immediately foreseen was that by wiping the governmental slate clear in Germany, it would deny to the occupying powers the usual recourse of governing the occupied areas through the already established government. It imposed on the occupying powers the enormous and complicated task of reshaping the political and administrative structure of the country and finding new persons to man it. This would require a great deal of planning and preparation of a detailed nature. At the expert level in all three countries, the tendency was to try to plan, during the war, in considerable detail, for the post-war settlements and occupation. But at the level of the heads of state, the policy of each one of the Big Three was to postpone decisions on the terms of the peace. The reason for this lay in the recognition that ultimate political goals in some areas were divergent; and to try to resolve issues of the post-war world would make immediate, possibly divisive issues out of what were otherwise merely potential future differences. So long as the war was on it was in the interest of all to preserve Allied unity, and as between East and West, there was always a lurking suspicion that the other would make a deal and drop out of the war, or at least manage things so that the other got the larger share of the fighting.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Snell, Wartime Origins of the East-West Dilemma Over Germany, pp. 14-39.

G. READINESS OF RUSSIANS AND BRITISH TO SHAPE MILITARY STRATEGY  
TO POLITICAL ENDS -- UNREADINESS OF USA

The reasons, therefore, for not pressing for inter-Allied agreement on detailed post-war plans for Germany seemed compelling to all so long as the issue in Germany was in any real doubt. But whereas beginning in the late winter of 1944-45 the Russians obviously conducted their operations in the light of the kind of settlement they hoped to reach in Germany, and our British Allies in the West also tried to adjust strategies to political goals, we did not effectively awaken to the longer term problems of the peace settlement in Germany until, in effect, many of our options had expired.

There were many reasons for the American slowness to adjust, as our more detailed examination later will disclose. Among them were (a) our tendency to segregate political considerations from military operations, and to subordinate long-term goals to short-term interests; (b) the general lack of system in our policy-making practices at that time; (c) the interregnum associated with Roosevelt's illness and death; and (d) our preoccupation with bringing to a victorious end the war in the Pacific -- a preoccupation that did not significantly distract either Britain or Russia from their primary concern with the shape of a settlement of affairs in Europe.

### III. THE MAJOR "DECISION" - DEVELOPMENT OF FORMAL U.S. COMMITMENTS ON ZONAL ARRANGEMENTS IN GERMANY

#### A. THE POLICY DECISION AND THE OPERATIONAL OR ENFORCING DECISIONS

It is possible to identify three policy "decisions" wherein we apparently exercised an option which it now appears predisposed or committed us to the difficult Berlin position to which by the summer of 1945 we were more or less irrevocably bound. The first (and by far the most important of these) was the complex series of acts and failures to act, decisions and failures to decide, which eventuated in the tripartite Protocol on Zones of Occupation and Administration of the "Greater Berlin" Area of 12 September 1944, and the Agreement on Control Machinery in Germany dated 14 November 1944, but not approved by the United Kingdom until 5 December 1944, nor by the USA until 24 January 1945, and finally by the USSR on 6 February 1945. The other two were lesser in importance and anti-climactic in nature and concerned actions that we might have taken, in the operational phase of the major decisions, to make the most of the policy to which we were already committed.

Of the latter two, one was the decision at the end of March 1945 not to try to capture Berlin, and the other was the decision in June 1945 to withdraw Anglo-American forces from the Russian zone before explicit and specific guarantees were given of unrestricted access to Berlin.

None of these, especially the first, was by any means as simple or clear-cut as it may seem to be when summarily stated. This is why the first use of the word "decision" above is

enclosed in quotes. The complexities and ambiguities that were involved will in fact be one of the characteristics that must be taken into account in understanding the policy- and decision-making process -- then and now -- and these will be made more evident in the narrative examination that follows. One of the problems we face is that almost everyone except those who actually make policy decisions think they are simpler than in reality they are.

#### B. PRELIMINARY NEED TO DEVELOP A FIRM NATIONAL POLICY

Under the circumstances then prevailing, the development of formal U.S. commitments on zonal arrangements involved two phases of activity. In the first, we would (or should) make up our own national mind, as a coherent government, concerning the policy we wished to pursue. In the second, by negotiation, agreement or action involving our Allies, we would attempt to realize as much of our determined policy as was possible.

From the evidence available, it is clear that our British Allies moved through these two phases promptly, in proper sequence, and with about as much efficiency as external circumstances permitted. The specifics of the Russian processes are almost completely obscured, but very clearly they made up their collective national mind concerning what they wanted without evident agonizing, and then proceeded with directness and rough efficiency to get as much as was possible of what they wanted.

In contrast, although on the record many individual American officials seem to have been as well informed as their English or Russian counterparts of the factors to be considered and the forces at work, and to have had good ideas of what to do about it, as a national government we did not make up our mind concerning what we wanted and how to go about getting it until the chances of doing anything effective were very slim

indeed. It should be noted, of course, that anything related to a German settlement inescapably involved the most critical and long-recognized interests of Russia. It also clearly affected the power balance on the continent with which Britain had been directly and vitally concerned since the 16th century. In this circumstance, it was probably natural that in both Russia and Britain a consistent national policy was much more readily attainable than in the U.S., where these factors of immediacy and long experience were missing.

Despite the inclination of the Big Three, already noted, to postpone as long as possible inter-Allied consideration of specifics of post-war settlements, wherever joint occupation was involved some understandings were inescapably necessary. British-American consideration of problems of German occupation began during the Casablanca Conference in January 1943, when President Roosevelt let fall a remark to Anthony Eden that U.S. troops would remain in Germany after the war as part of an Allied occupation. Seizing upon this opening, Eden came to Washington to discuss the matter. On 17 March at a White House tea there was a discussion of what Allied procedures should be used in Germany during the first six months after German collapse. Harry Hopkins noted in his memoirs that he suggested that, since there was no understanding between the U.S., the U.K., and the USSR as to whose army should be where and what kind of administration should be set up, there should be some kind of formal agreement. Unless we acted promptly after the collapse in Germany, there would either be anarchy or a Communist government. Accordingly, it was suggested that State should work out a plan with the British which would then be agreed upon between these two nations and thereafter discussed with the Russians. The President agreed to this.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert E. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins (New York, 1948), pp. 714-716.



### C. THE BETTER BRITISH STAFF PROCEDURES

A week later the President sent a note to his Secretary of State saying "apropos of our conversation the other afternoon, I wish you'd explore with the British the question of what our plan is to be in Germany and Italy during the first few months after Germany's collapse. I think you had better confer with Stimson about it too. My thought is, if we get a substantial meeting of the minds with the British, that we should then take it up with the Russians."<sup>2</sup>

Although this Presidential directive was acted upon literally, there is no documentary evidence that the staff work pertinent to this problem developed over the previous two years by the Advisory Committee was channeled at this time into the policy-making process. Nor is there evidence of any other high-level effort to assure that the U.S. had an agreed American policy which would be understood and followed by all concerned. Different ideas were current, and favored in different places within the Government. The dominant considerations of the President himself regarding occupation of Germany, and immediately related matters, had nothing to do with the substance of the great amount of staff work that had been done in peace terms and occupation problems. Almost certainly he was completely ignorant of it. His policy predilections were independent of all this, and reflected the prior knowledge, hunches, and personal notions of a President who was literally too busy to acquaint himself with the lower echelon studies. The disfavor in which Cordell Hull found himself with the President, the ill feelings between Hull and Sumner Welles, probably contributed to this.

The British evidently had policy processes that were better coordinated, and that better utilized the work of

---

<sup>2</sup> Cordell Hull, Memoirs (New York, 1948), II, pp. 1284-85.

experts on the support staffs. Two months after his return from his March trip to Washington -- on 25 May 1943 -- Foreign Minister Anthony Eden submitted to the War Cabinet a memo on "Armistices and Related Problems." This suggested an approach to the U.S. and the USSR on procedures for negotiation and execution of an armistice. Eden suggested that Germany should be "totally occupied" and for that purpose should be divided into three zones, for British, Russian, and U.S. troops. Eden's motive was to avoid separate Soviet armistices with eastern European countries because of the possibility that such arrangements would lead to the establishment of a separate Russian system in eastern Europe. The War Cabinet, to which Eden addressed his proposal, agreed to begin discussions with the USSR and the USA on the problems raised by his memo, but without commitment to total occupation. On 2 July 1943, Eden gave a memo to Russian Ambassador Maisky, and on 14 July 1943 a comparable memo to Ambassador Winant, summarizing British proposals in very general terms but without reference to any details of occupation of Germany.<sup>1</sup>

The indecision of the War Cabinet on the action to be taken on Eden's proposal was resolved on 4 August 1943 when Churchill circulated to the Cabinet a memo saying that the growing volume and complexity of problems with respect to liberated areas made it necessary to establish a Ministerial Committee to settle minor problems and make recommendations to the War Cabinet on major problems. Therefore, he appointed a Ministerial Committee on Armistice Terms and Civil Administration under the chairmanship of Deputy Prime Minister Clement Attlee. This was in fact a continuation of an ad hoc committee set up earlier to consider armistice terms for Italy. (Later,

---

<sup>1</sup> Sir Llewellyn Woodward, "British Foreign Policy in the Second World War," (Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1962), pp. 443-444.

on 19 April 1944, the Committee name was changed to "Armistice and Post-War Committee" and it was then given wider terms of reference, to include consideration of "general, political and military questions in the post-war period.") At about the same time, on 9 August 1943, a Post-Hostilities Planning Subcommittee of the Chiefs of Staff Committee was established, headed by H.M.G. Jebb, who was head of the Economic and Reconstruction Department of the Foreign Office. This subcommittee was given the mission of considering post-war strategic problems, and in so doing to maintain close contact with the three Service departments and the Foreign Office. It was instructed to propose draft instruments for formal suspension of hostilities, and to submit plans for their enforcement, maintaining close contact with the three Service departments and the Foreign Office. It might report to the Chiefs of Staff Committee or to the Ministerial Committee on Armistice Terms and Civil Administration.<sup>1</sup> It is important to observe that the British organization for considering these questions was joint military-civilian, was charged both with formulation of policy proposals and developing plans, had membership representing both the Foreign Office and the military services, and enjoyed direct access to the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Chiefs of Staff.

The Attlee Committee submitted its report at about the time that the QUADRANT Conference (Quebec, 1943) finished its work, and this report immediately became firm British policy regarding the occupation of Germany. Churchill in his memoirs specified that Cabinet Committee recommendations were "in agreement with the Chiefs of Staff." This policy called for complete occupation of Germany, with Berlin jointly occupied by the three powers, with Russia occupying an eastern zone, and with

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 445.

the western portion divided between the U.K. in the north and the U.S. in the south. Since the U.S. zone was smallest, the the U.S. was favored to occupy Austria. France was to be in the American sphere of influence; Denmark and the Low Countries in the British sphere.<sup>1</sup> The point must not be missed that the western boundary of the Russian zone, and the provision for joint occupation of Berlin 110 miles within the Russian zone, were set forth in this policy substantially as later adopted in reality (and without express provisions for western access to Berlin). The British plan was evidently not communicated to any American, high or low, until much later. Aspects of this British policy on German occupation first became evident to Americans indirectly, in the course of considering a draft contingency plan (code name: RANKIN) for an emergency exploitation of possible German collapse before an implementation of OVERLORD.

In April 1943, the newly appointed Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander (COSSAC), Lt. Gen. Sir Frederick Morgan, had received a directive from the CCS (the Supreme Allied Commander himself not yet being named) to develop a plan to exploit a situation in which the Nazis would: (a) suddenly surrender unconditionally, (b) retire rapidly from the western front, or (c) suddenly weaken greatly. Shortly before the convening of QUADRANT, an outline plan was developed for the consideration of the CCS at that conference. In putting his staff to work on the problem, Sir Frederick was keenly aware of the lack of necessary political inputs. As a British officer, he turned to the Post-Hostilities Subcommittee, but as yet they had nothing definite to offer on occupation area assumptions (no doubt because the Attlee Committee had not

---

<sup>1</sup> Winston S. Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy (Boston, 1953), pp. 507-508; Franklin, "Zonal Boundaries and Berlin Access," pp. 8-9.

completed its deliberations). So, as he recalled in his memoirs:

So we tackled it from first principles. It was obvious that the Russians would enter Germany from the east and the U.S. and British Armies from the west. Further, there was no disputing the fact that the Americans would start from England on the right of the British, the whole party would wheel half left, and this would bring the Americans to southwestern Germany, the British into northwestern Germany. We started, therefore, by dividing the map of Germany into three which gave us an answer not far off from that at which we finally arrived. There was at that time no question of a French zone of Germany....

In passing it may be of interest to comment upon the bland statement that the American Army would obviously leave England for Europe on the right of the British Army, that Cherbourg was always regarded as an American objective and LeHavre as British. Looking back, this big strategic decision was in all probability originally made by some official in the Quartering Directorate of the British War Office, presumably with North African possibilities in mind. I do not believe that anyone realized at the time the full and ultimate implication of quartering the first American troops to arrive in Britain in northern Ireland. From northern Ireland, as American strength in the British Isles increased, the tendency was naturally to spread into the west of England, partly because western England is nearer to the U.S. and so offers the more convenient terminals for trans-Atlantic convoys and partly because the British were busily engaged at the time in fighting a war in southeastern England. The third consideration was that the American Command would want to keep itself and its resources as concentrated as possible...at COSSAC, therefore, we did not even trouble to raise the point, although, as will be told later, it was raised for us before we were through.

The first check came with the blue pencil posed above the map of Germany prepared for trisection. How did one cut a country in three anyway? Was the idea to create three new countries, or one new country administered in three provinces? Should we aim at three independent economic units, and, if so, was such an idea possible?...and what about Berlin? Were we to continue to regard the place as a capital, or was there to be another such...or was there to be a capital at all....

Whatever zone boundaries might be decided on...there would clearly be certain tasks that would immediately fall to the lot of the armies...seizing and holding securely key points in the German...war economy...then there would be the matter of disarming the German armed forces...we must also consider the disarmament of Germany as a whole .... Then...the question of maintaining some semblance of order in the country, and at once arose the specter of the displaced masses...there would be foreigners who had been dragged into Germany....

The Russian zone would naturally be the affair of the Russians. Our general idea was to establish ourselves on the Rhine, Americans from the Swiss frontier to Duesseldorf, British thence northward from the Ruhr to Luebeck inclusive...our first project suggested the occupation of Berlin - or any other capital, were there to be one, should be in equal tripartite force by a division each of U.S., British and Russian troops. We then toyed with the idea of locating British and U.S. troops in the Russian zone...British and Russian in the U.S. zone... U.S. and...Russian...in the British zone. Desirable as this might seem in theory, we were early forced to reject the idea as administratively impractical.<sup>1</sup>

Sir Frederick and his planners gravitated, evidently by sheer force of circumstance, toward some of the zonal arrangements later adopted. The outline plan was formally considered by the CCS at QUADRANT, approved in principle and directed to be continuously renewed. The official record of the meetings made no mention of any special attention to its zonal implications.<sup>2</sup>

Secretary of State Hull was at Quebec, and spent much time with Eden discussing issues of a German settlement. It was the only wartime summit conference he was invited to attend. Hull was interested in the very problems with which RANKIN dealt, for he came equipped with a draft of a Four-Power

---

<sup>1</sup> Frederick Morgan, KCB, Overture to OVERLORD, (Garden City, New York, 1950), pp. 113-117.

<sup>2</sup> Matloff, Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, p. 225.

Declaration which provided for common action in all matters of surrender, disarmament or occupation (which in Hull's mind was associated with his ideas of a United Nations). But Hull did not attend the CCS meeting on RANKIN, where specifics of planned occupation operations were taken up, although his Declaration was accepted by the Conference.<sup>1</sup> There was in fact at this time, and for many months to come, a complete lack of communication between those who were concerned with policy studies dealing with occupation and those who were concerned with operations plans, which plans necessarily included assumptions concerning occupation policy.

The usual lack of coordination in American consideration of strategic policy was exacerbated in the summer of 1943 by the friction between Secretary of State Hull and Under Secretary of State Welles, which came to its climax at that time. Hull had strong political support in the Senate; Welles was personally close to Roosevelt. Welles was in charge of the studies of the problems of making the peace, but on crucial issues was opposed to the recommendations of his experts. Notably, he favored dismemberment of Germany and associated harsh measures which his experts generally believed unwise or infeasible. Hull agreed generally with the experts, but was repeatedly bypassed and noticeably ignored by the President. The rivalry came to a climax on the eve of QUADRANT, when Welles resigned, although the resignation was not announced until 25 September 1943, when Edward R. Stettinius was named to succeed him. The dismissal of Welles emboldened the previously suppressed experts at State, and encouraged Hull to express his views on a German peace to Eden at Quebec in August and to Eden and Molotov later in Moscow in October.

---

<sup>1</sup> Sir Llewellyn Woodward, British Foreign Policy in the Second World War (Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1962), pp. 445-446; Franklin, "Zonal Boundaries and Berlin Access," p. 3.

But President Roosevelt, with the aid sometimes of his personal assistants in the White House, continued to act as his own Secretary of State, frequently ignoring the Secretary and the Department completely. He used Navy communications to deal with both Churchill and Stalin, sometimes to communicate with Winant. Sometimes State was informed, sometimes not.<sup>1</sup>

By contrast, British officials got a copy of the Attlee Committee report to Lt. Gen. Sir Frederick Morgan, for his guidance, soon after its completion, which was shortly after the QUADRANT Conference (14-24 August 1943). When Morgan visited the U.S. in October, he gave to General Marshall a paper which proposed the changes that would be needed in RANKIN, as approved by the CCS at QUADRANT, to bring it into harmony with British government policy concerning zones of occupation. General Marshall referred the Morgan paper to the JCS for study, and there, its political implications being recognized, it was referred to the President through Admiral Leahy. Neither Secretary Hull, nor anyone among the State Department planners at work on such problems, was informed of the terms or even the existence of the British proposals.<sup>2</sup> The President himself did not take up the matter until a month later, in a session on 19 November 1943 with the JCS on board the USS IOWA, en route to the Teheran Conference.

On this occasion, the President engaged in a wide-ranging review of U.S. policy with the JCS. Those present at the meeting were the President, his advisor Harry Hopkins, Admiral Leahy, General Marshall, Admiral King, General Arnold, Rear Admiral Brown and General Royal. The second item on the

---

<sup>1</sup> Snell, Wartime Origins of the East-West Dilemma Over Germany, pp. 27-29.

<sup>2</sup> Franklin, "Zonal Boundaries and Berlin Access," pp. 8-9.



afternoon agenda of 19 November 1943 was the RANKIN plan. The RANKIN plan up for consideration was the plan approved in principle by the CCS at QUADRANT as later revised by General Morgan to make it accord with British occupation policy set forth in the Attlee Committee report. The available records suggest that this was the first time the President had really addressed himself to the specifics of an occupation plan. He objected strenuously to the zonal arrangements proposed in the RANKIN plan because he wanted the northwestern zone of Germany and the north German ports for the U.S. and because he was intent on avoiding complications with France and Italy, especially with de Gaulle. He would leave Germany west of the Rhine and southwestern Germany to the British. It is not recorded that he paid any attention to Berlin or the Soviet zone; he directed his entire attention to reversing the allocation of British and American portions of the western zone. At the close of the meeting he traced his ideas of occupation zone on a National Geographic Map (see Figure 1) and gave the map to Rear Admiral Brown who passed it to General Marshall.<sup>1</sup>

As Commander-in-Chief, the President instructed his military advisors to seek to convince their British counterparts on the Combined Chiefs of Staff to accept a reversal of the allocation of German territory for occupation as between the British and U.S. forces. On the U.S. side these instructions were to the military. No similar instructions were given to those in the State Department who were working on the same issues -- as will be seen below, they learned about the matter only by accident, much later, when it was too late to do anything about it.

---

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States/Diplomatic Papers/The Conferences at Cairo and Teheran, 1943 (State Department Publication No. 7187 GPO, Washington, D.C., 1961), pp. 253-261.



FIGURE 1. Pr

A

UNCLASSIFIED

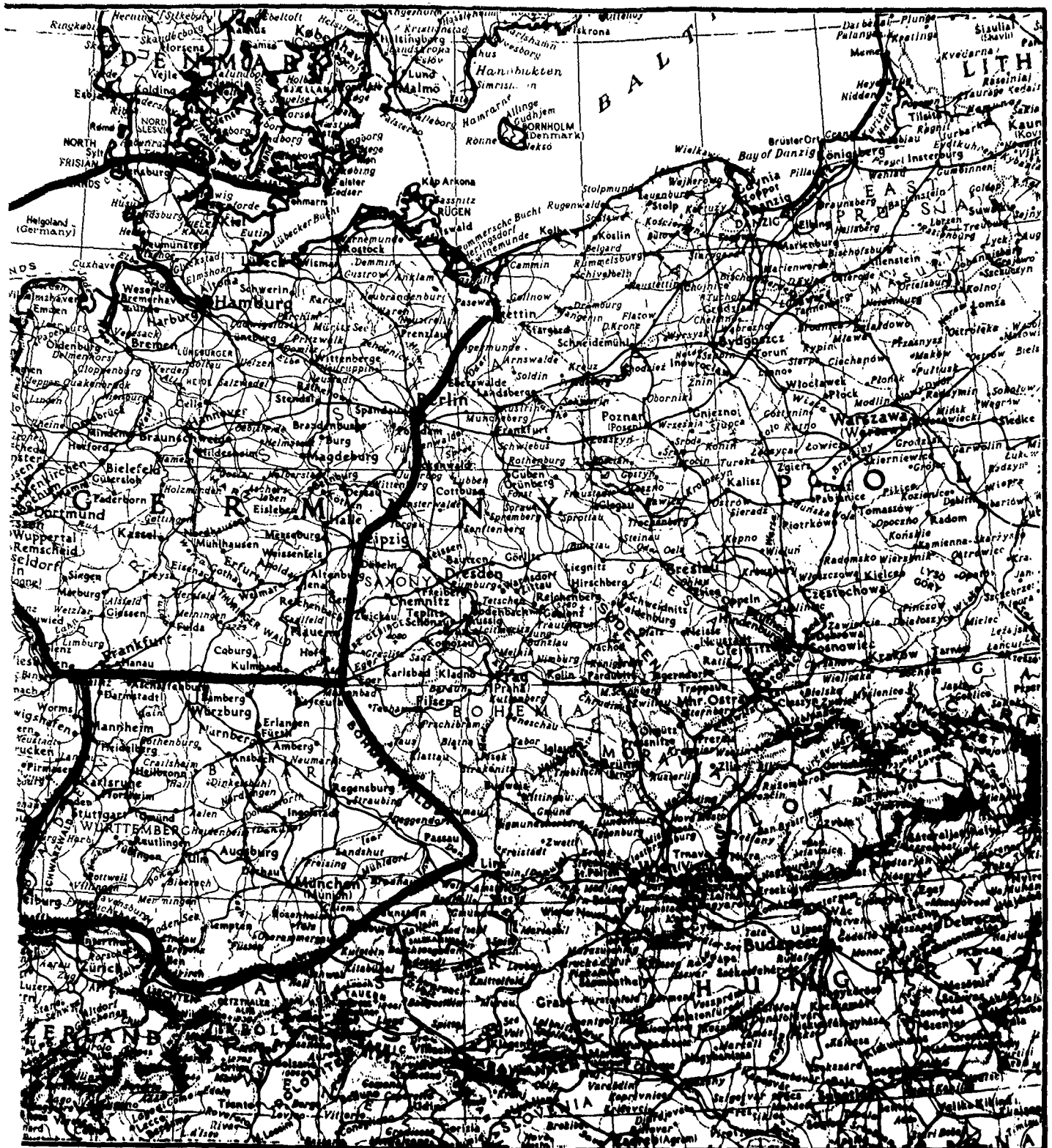


FIGURE 1. President Roosevelt's Map of His Ideas on Occupation Zones  
in Germany, 19 November 1943

2-28-66-5

B

UNCLASSIFIED

#### D. EARLY ANGLO-AMERICAN DIFFERENCES ON OCCUPATION POLICY

The development of an Anglo-American agreement on occupation policy for Germany was in the context of a background of differences between the two Western Allies over policies of civil government in liberated areas that had arisen first in North Africa and Sicily. In North Africa, the U.S. had at first strongly favored excluding de Gaullists from the French government there, whereas the British supported the de Gaullists, whom they had nurtured since Dunkerque. On the heels of the disagreement came differences in the first planning of civil government for Sicily, where the British felt they should have a senior role because of their vital strategic interest in the Mediterranean.

Concurrently, basic differences of administrative philosophy emerged. Early in the war the British had established an Administration of Territories Committee for Europe (ATE), which was intended to have jurisdiction over liberated areas of the European Theater. It had an efficient organizational infra-structure, and the British idea was for the military to turn over to this organization, at a comparatively early period, responsibility for occupied territories. When the U.S. became involved in planning European operations, the British proposed to make the ATE a Combined operation, by adding American personnel to the existing organization, and leaving it otherwise unchanged, with its base in London. It was recognized that the British were better prepared for the occupation tasks in Europe, but this proposal was regarded by most American officials, both military and civilian, as a ploy to enable Britain to dominate post-war policy in Europe. Rightly or wrongly, the principle was accepted generally that if the operation was based in Washington, the U.S. would dominate; if based in London, the British would dominate.

This issue had been talked over and negotiated throughout

the spring of 1943 by American and British officials, and an uneasy and inconclusive compromise had been reached on 3 July 1943 in the tentative approval by the CCS of a Combined Civil Affairs Committee (CCAC) based in Washington. But the real powers of the CCAC were undefined, and the ATE continued to function.<sup>1</sup>

#### E. MOSCOW, TEHERAN, CAIRO AND BEGINNINGS OF THE EAC

There was evident need, so far as Germany was concerned, for tripartite American-British-Russian understanding, not just Anglo-American. This had been in the mind of Foreign Minister Eden for a long time, and American approval of the idea, in its most general terms, had been given as early as March 1943. Sometime in the late summer of 1943 Eden therefore developed, and no doubt got War Cabinet approval of, a proposal for a tripartite European Advisory Commission (EAC). The proposal was formally submitted at the Foreign Ministers Conference convened in Moscow on 17 October 1943 as a preliminary to the first meeting of the Big Three, at Teheran. In essence, the proposal called for the establishment of a tripartite advisory commission, to sit in London and whose function it would be to study and make recommendations to the three governments on European questions connected with the termination of hostilities in Europe which the three governments saw fit to refer to it, the first task specified being development of detailed recommendations concerning terms of surrender.

From the beginning there were differences between the American and British views of the functions of the proposed committee. The British wished to endow it with rather sweeping powers.

<sup>1</sup> Coles and Weinberg, Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors, pp. 115-138.  
Chapter V, "Washington or London?"

powers to make far-reaching recommendations, whereas the dominant official U.S. view was that it was unwise to try to settle post-war political problems while the war was still on.<sup>1</sup> The Foreign Ministers Conference tentatively approved the idea of an EAC, and the proposal for its establishment was put on the agenda of the Teheran meeting.

At Teheran the Big Three formally approved the establishment of the European Advisory Commission. But the ambiguities concerning the status and functions of the EAC were not clarified. It is very clear from the record that President Roosevelt did not want the EAC to have any real functions or power; he seems to have considered it a sop to our British friends. The problem of surrender terms, of occupation zones and conditions, of boundaries and of indemnities and other such matters had been studied extensively within the State Department and by the special committees set up under the aegis of the State Department as indicated above. But some of the most pressing of these subjects -- notably zonal arrangements and occupation arrangements -- were considered by the President and those immediately around him as either something for him personally to decide, without consulting or informing the State Department, or as a military matter to be judged exclusively by the criteria of military operational convenience. There was no high-level intention of the American side of leaving initiative in these matters to the EAC.

During the Cairo Conference, at a dinner meeting at Roosevelt's villa in Cairo on 3 December 1943 attended only by Roosevelt, Hopkins and Leahy, and Churchill and Eden, Roosevelt discussed, among many other things, the subject of German occupation zones, Churchill and Eden arguing for British

---

<sup>1</sup> Philip E. Mosely, "The Occupation of Germany: New Light on How the Zones Were Drawn," pp. 158-159.

occupation of the northwest zone.<sup>1</sup> The following day, the CCS gave formal consideration to the COSSAC revision of RANKIN that Roosevelt had objected to aboard the IOWA. Discussion centered on a JCS proposal (CCS 320/4 revised) to revise the zone allocation of RANKIN according to the Roosevelt proposals of 19 November. Admiral Leahy introduced the subject by saying the matter had been discussed the night before by the President and the Prime Minister, but he gave no indication of any sort of agreement between them or any decision having been reached. He added, according to the official minutes of the meeting, that he "considered that it would have to be examined by the political agencies concerned in both countries." (In the case of the U.S., it never was.) There was a low-key discussion then of the conflicting Anglo-American preferences for occupation zones, and of the logistic difficulties involved in a last-minute reversal of them. The outcome was to defer decision, and to direct COSSAC "to examine and report on the implications of revising his planning on the basis of the new allocation of sphere of occupation."<sup>2</sup>

----- This followed literally and without change the lines drawn

---

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Relations of the U.S./Cairo, Teheran, p. 674; Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 508-509; Leahy, I Was There, p. 213.

<sup>2</sup> Foreign Relations of the U.S./Cairo, Teheran, pp. 688-689, 786-787. The proposal of the JCS put before the CCS at this meeting, responsive to the President's instruction of 19 November, was for:

- a. U.S. sphere. The general area Netherlands, Northern Germany as far east as the line Berlin-Stettin, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The boundary of this area is to be as follows: southern boundary of the Netherlands, thence to Duesseldorf on the Rhine, down the east bank of the Rhine to Mainz, thence due east to Bayreuth, thence north to Leipzig, thence northeast to Cottbus, thence north to Berlin (exclusive), thence to Stettin (inclusive).
- b. British sphere. Generally the territory to the west and south of the American western boundary.

by Roosevelt on the National Geographic Map aboard the USS IOWA a fortnight before. The one thing about this hastily contrived proposal most noticeable now is that it described a western zone that extended all the way to Berlin. What its prospects of acceptance might have been if it had been fed into our political machinery clearly and efficiently can only be conjectured. It certainly asked for the largest and richest share of Germany for the U.S., and it is reasonable to suppose it would have been resisted by both British and Russians. Moreover, it was obviously gross and careless in character, and ignored long-established political and administrative boundaries, as well as lines of communication and transportation and functional economic groupings. (COSSAC's first reaction was that it was a practical joke.) But if those working on such things at a staff level had been assigned to draw up a more reasonable set of proposed boundaries, using the Roosevelt map as a general guide to what was wanted, rather than as something to be accepted in every specific detail, they could no doubt have made the proposal into something more likely to receive serious consideration from our Allies. But this was never done, and the proposal never in fact had a chance.

#### F. AMERICAN DISARRAY CONCERNING THE EAC

Much of the history of the formulation of German occupation policy in the months after Teheran is a history of confusion of American officials at the working level, especially in the State Department, concerning the real American policy toward the EAC. Roosevelt had approved its establishment -- this they knew; but he did not want it to work -- this they did not know. Secretary Hull had recommended it, and had participated in the preliminary discussions of the idea at the Foreign Ministers Conference in Moscow. But he advised the President as early as 27 November that "we have no intention of playing up the importance of this body." However, President Roosevelt



immediately appointed the American ambassador in London to be the U.S. representative on the EAC; and there was nothing on the surface of things to indicate we did not mean the EAC to perform the functions literally assigned to it.

The War Department seems to have had the word early, and from the beginning was strongly opposed to the establishment of the EAC, sensing in it a British move to replace the CCAC, which was located in Washington and subject to the Combined Chiefs of Staff, by a London organization which would be more easily influenced or controlled by the British government. The only ones who apparently took the EAC in full seriousness were the British, the U.S. representation on the EAC, and the persons in the State Department who were given the job of supporting the U.S. representative on the EAC.<sup>1</sup> (The attitude of the Russian Ambassador Gusev, who was the Russian representative on the Commission, and of the Russian government, is not relevant here.)

Acting on the supposition that the British proposal for a European Advisory Commission was intended to shift control of occupation-enforced post-war policy from Washington to London, U.S. War Department officials undertook, immediately after

---

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Relations of the U.S./Cairo, Teheran, p. 616; Franklin, "Zonal Boundaries and Access to Berlin," page 45. The official British history of British Foreign Policy in World War II cites a memorandum from Sir William Strang to Sir Anthony Eden for the latter's use in conversations with Secretary of State Stettinius in April of 1944, which memorandum pointed out that although the decision to set up the EAC had been supported by the U.S. delegation in Moscow, it had been coldly received by the U.S. Government in Washington, especially by the President and the War Department. Because of this the Americans had limited the functions of the EAC, according to this history, by refusing for example to allow it to consider the administration of liberated areas, and had for weeks been unwilling to begin discussions on problems of occupation of Germany. (Woodward, British Foreign Policy, p. 477.)

Teheran, to find means to make it subordinate to the CCAC, which was located in Washington. On 25 November 1943, Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy, then in Cairo, addressed a memo to Harry Hopkins on the subject of the EAC, the Combined Chiefs of Staff Committee, and the CCAC. The McCloy memo enclosed two memos, one being a formal military study dated Cairo 22 November 1943, and addressed to Mr. McCloy, the findings of which he endorsed.

This study noted that there had been a recent effort by the British to transfer all determination of occupational post-war policy to London. It stated that the policy of the U.S. Government was to base civil administration in liberated areas or occupied territories primarily on military considerations as long as war continued, and that on the U.S. side there was ample provision for obtaining political and economic views within the machinery of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. But increasingly it had been the experience in the CCAC that the British referred matters to London so much that a complete frustration of the CCAC had resulted. It was believed that Eden's proposal of the EAC at the Moscow Conference was a ploy to replace the CCAC with a London-based group. The British hoped to introduce political considerations into policy making for liberated areas whereas "the American point of view [was] that during the progress of the war the introduction of all political decisions should be based on military considerations."<sup>1</sup> McCloy's recommendations were that the CCAC should be continued as the vehicle for developing directives to field commanders and advocated confining such directives to basic matters, leaving to field commanders and their staffs the working out of all details.

---

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Relations of the U.S./Cairo, Teheran, pp. 415-422.

For the next several days McCloy, sometimes with Ambassador Winant present, negotiated with Eden, Jebb, and other British in Cairo to obtain a supplementary agreement concerning the terms of reference of the EAC. On 28 November Stimson wired McCloy that he and Hull approved McCloy's suggestion that EAC proposals be approved by CCAC before submission to governments. McCloy was keeping in touch with Hopkins and on 30 November 1943 he advised Hopkins that he had obtained Eden's agreement to his suggested amendment partly in return for a concession that the U.S. would treat EAC seriously and put good men on it to help Winant (who had been selected by FDR the day before for the job). There were three other clauses to this informal supplementary agreement: (1) the British would give up the idea of moving the CCAC to London; (2) the British would empower their representatives on the CCAC in Washington so that the CCAC could in fact function, and (3) the CCS would prepare final directives to commanders in the field.<sup>1</sup> Four days after the agreement was signed (4 December) McCloy addressed another memo to Hopkins saying he believed the British would find a way to avoid conforming with the agreement. The next day he wrote again, specifying this time that Jebb of the Foreign Office and General Kirtby seemed personally favorable to the agreement, but had told him they did not believe they could convince the War Cabinet.

It was from McCloy, the Assistant Secretary of War, that Winant got his first recorded suggestions of an agenda for the EAC. These recommendations in order of priority were: (1) directive for civil administration for France; (2) directive for civil administration for Belgium, Norway, Holland, and Denmark; (3) military armistice for Germany; (4) military

---

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Relations of the U.S./Cairo, Teheran, pp. 352-354, 444-446, 790-793.

government for Germany; (5) comprehensive surrender terms for Germany; (6) terms of surrender for other states. With these suggestions it was recommended that the Commission should confine its recommendations on the above-listed subjects to "statements of broad general political, economic and military principles upon which the Combined Chiefs of Staff may base their directive to the appropriate military commander."<sup>1</sup>

For reasons that are not evident from the documentary record, the limitations placed upon the EAC by high-level American reservations concerning EAC were not conveyed to the U.S. officials centered in the State Department whose job it was to support the American representatives on the EAC. This is a little difficult to understand in view of the fact that Secretary Hull was at least partly aware of these reservations, and Winant must have learned something of them from McCloy. But it was the fact nonetheless.

Although the State Department officials in Washington charged with the task of supporting the EAC in London were not informed of the high-echelon U.S. policy toward EAC, their opposite numbers in the War Department did act in accordance with this high-level intent to give the EAC little power.

Professor Philip E. Mosely, who from December 1943 until June 1944 was continuously a member, sometimes Chairman, of the Working Security Committee (WSC) which was set up to service the EAC, wrote in 1950 what is the fullest account of the workings of the WSC. Even in 1950 he appeared to be not fully informed of the attitude toward the EAC that was held by Secretary of State Hull and by President Roosevelt.

The Working Security Committee was established in the State Department early in December, with State-War-Navy

---

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Relations of the U.S./Cairo, Teheran, pp. 773-775.

membership, to develop agreed Committee recommendations for clearance with superior officers in the Departments. When approved by the Departments, these recommendations would then be transmitted, through the State Department chairman of the Committee and through State Department channels, as approved instructions to Ambassador Winant in London. The establishment of the WSC was approved in the State, War and Navy Departments at the Assistant Secretary level in early December, but the Civil Affairs Division of the War Department refused at first to take any part at all on grounds that the surrender and occupation of Germany was purely a military matter. Later what Mosely described as "intervention from above" brought the first attendance by representatives of the Civil Affairs Division of the War Department. Mosely and the others in the State Department who participated in the WSC considered that this operation in support of the EAC was a place in which the work of the interdivisional committee on Germany might be turned into specific items of agreed policy for the peace settlements and post-war policy. But the Civil Affairs Division representative on the WSC vetoed all proposals, and as a result Winant was left entirely without instructions during a period when the U.K. and Russia were moving toward an agreement on zones.

Throughout the winter of 1943-44 there was a great deal of recrimination between representatives of the Department of State and CAD. Each accused the other of exceeding his authority: State was trespassing upon the jurisdiction of the military, CAD was willfully obstructing American diplomatic efforts. What was not clear to the protagonists then, but is evident now, is that each was trying faithfully to discharge his duties according to the standard procedures of his agency and in the light of the instructions he received from his superiors. The cause of the difficulty was the failure of those in higher authority to make clear to those at this working

level what was expected of them and what was not. Because of this failure, working level personnel worked at cross purposes, and blamed each other, or each other's agency, for the frustration.

#### G. EAC MOVES TOWARD ZONAL AGREEMENT WHILE THE U.S. ABSTAINS

The EAC held its first organizing meeting in London on 15 December 1943. At the end of December and in early January, a British Foreign Office representative visited Washington to inquire into U.S. progress concerning taking the initiative on proposals for consideration within the EAC. Presumably his report made clear that no U.S. proposals were in early prospect. In any event, while the U.S. defaulted this opportunity, the British representative in EAC presented a draft proposal of a surrender instrument, and an agreement on zones, at the first formal meeting held on 15 January 1944. The latter followed the British policy on zones developed the previous summer by the Attlee Committee, later conveyed to Lt. Gen. Sir Frederick Morgan to permit him to revise RANKIN accordingly, then rejected by Roosevelt and ordered reconsidered by the CCS at Cairo.

However, Ambassador Winant was entirely without instructions, and he could say neither yea nor nay. On 18 February 1944 the Soviets made their own counterproposal of occupation zones in the EAC, and it accepted the British proposal of Joint occupation of greater Berlin, and the demarcation of a western boundary of Soviet zone substantially as proposed by Britain. Thus, the British and the Russians were agreed on the joint occupation of greater Berlin, and upon the East-West division of Germany between the Russians in the east and the Americans and British in the west.

This British-Russian agreement on a division of Germany for occupation purposes between East and West, looked at the time very different from what it looks now, and even seemed a

very good bargain for the West. First of all, the main words of the Big Three concerning Germany, at their recent meeting at Teheran, had left the impression that some sort of partition of Germany would later be agreed upon as part of a general peace settlement, and a general peace settlement was anticipated fairly soon. Second, it seemed to many Western observers that the territory conceded to the West was much more than the West could win by force of arms. Anglo-American forces in Italy were still bogged down south of Rome, and the Normandy landings were months away. Many in authority feared the Russians might reach, not just Berlin, but the Rhine, before we did. The fact that the Soviets agreed so readily to the eastern boundary of the Soviet zone suggests an imperfectly understood element in the situation. Perhaps it was their confidence in ultimate partition, or in early Western withdrawal (suggested by Roosevelt at Teheran). Perhaps, also, it suggests that for these or other reasons they would have accepted for themselves a much smaller occupation zone had they been pressured strongly to do so. These possible reasons are only conjecture; but that the Russians were ready then to concede to the West what it seemed they did not have to concede is apparently a hard fact that has not yet been explained.

#### H. BELATED PRESENTATION OF ROOSEVELT'S ZONE IDEAS

A week after the British and the Russians had in effect reached general agreement on zones, on 25 February 1944, the CAD representatives to the WSC broke their silence by offering to WSC, for transmission to Ambassador Winant as negotiating instructions, a copy of Roosevelt's map of 19 November 1943, together with the directive to COSSAC (CCS 320/4 revised). The CAD representatives offered no explanations except that this represented the President's decision. (Very possibly they themselves knew very little about it, and could not give explanations if they wanted to.) It is clear from the later

account of the chief State Department participant at that time that the State representatives were both irritated and mystified. Regardless of the merits or demerits of the gist of the proposal as it had been extemporized in crude form by the President more than three months before, it was not only still in its original impromptu form, but in the context of the negotiations then in progress in London, the language of the directive to COSSAC was almost grotesquely inappropriate. Nevertheless, in what must be interpreted as a feeling of pique and frustration and in hope that the very absurdity of the proposal would serve to attract high-level attention to the impasse, the State representatives finally agreed, on 8 March, to forward the proposal, without comment, to Winant.<sup>1</sup>

This stimulated the frantic inquiries from the U.S. Embassy in London that had been expected. On 23 March, Winant cabled that his views would be brought directly to the President by his political advisor, George F. Kennan, who was to return to Washington a few days later. On 3 April 1944, Mr. Kennan presented the entire range of EAC issues to President Roosevelt, and the President promptly approved the proposal agreed upon by the British and the Russians with respect to joint occupation of Berlin and the division of Germany as between East and West; but he continued to insist upon the U.S. getting the northwest zone and the British taking the southwest zone. The President reportedly chuckled at the comedy of error concerning the dispatch of CCS 320/4 to Winant as instructions on zones. He was really not much interested in Berlin or the Soviet zone. What he was interested in, persistently interested in, was getting the northwest zone for the U.S.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Mosely, "The Occupation of Germany: New Light on How the Zones Were Drawn," pp. 171-172.

<sup>2</sup> Mosely, ibid., pp. 172-173; Franklin, "Zonal Boundaries and Access to Berlin," p. 18; Herbert Feis, Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin (Princeton, 1957), p. 362.



## I. THE PRESIDENTIAL PREOCCUPATION WITH A NORTHWEST ZONE

The Presidential preoccupation with getting a northwest zone for American occupation in Germany, first strongly evident aboard the USS IOWA, not only persisted, but became a kind of obsession, seeming to blind him to all other concerns in the matter of deciding upon the occupation zones. General Eisenhower at one point suggested a joint Anglo-American occupation of all of western Germany, but neither this nor any other advice turned the President away from his desire to get the NW zone for American occupation. In a memo to Acting Secretary of State Stettinius on 21 February 1944, he wrote, on the general subject of the U.S. role in post-war Europe:

I do not want the U.S. to have the post-war burden of reconstituting France, Italy and the Balkans. This is not our natural task.... It is definitely a British task in which the British are far more vitally interested than we are.

From this point of view of the U.S., our principal object is not to take part in the internal problems of southern Europe, but rather to take part in eliminating Germany [as a likely cause of a 3rd world war]....

I have had to consider also the case of maintaining American troops in some part of Germany.... Therefore I think the American policy should be to occupy northwestern Germany, the British occupying the area from the Rhine south, and also being responsible for the policing of France and Italy, if this should be necessary.

In regard to the long range security of Britain against Germany, this is not a part of the first occupation. The British will have plenty of time to work that out .... The Americans by that time will be only too glad to return all of their military forces from Europe....<sup>1</sup>

Pursuant to these principles, the President on 30 April 1944 approved a JCS paper (JCS 577/10), which recommended that Winant be instructed:

---

<sup>1</sup> Hull, Memoirs, II, pp. 1611-1612.

- To agree to boundaries of a Soviet zone as proposed by the Soviet delegation to EAC;
- To agree to the boundary between the northwest and southwest zones as proposed by the British delegation to EAC;
- To adhere to U.S. position that U.S. forces should occupy the northwest zone, and British forces the southwest zone plus Austria.

Instructions to this effect, initialed at State, were cabled to Winant the following day.

Regarding the development and dispatch of these instructions to Ambassador Winant, two points should not be missed. First, the JCS in this case was performing a staff function that would normally be centered in State (in this particular instance, the WSC). Second, neither the JCS staff work, nor the State Department which approved the message, nor the President himself, is recorded to have been concerned at all about the problem of the western boundary of the Soviet zone, or the long-range political implications of dividing Germany between East and West, or the location of Berlin as an enclave in the Soviet zone with what we now recognize as the attendant questions of free access. Although there is abundant evidence that at the expert level in State there had been serious concern over the later problems that such an occupation zone arrangement might lead to, and studies had indeed been made of the subject, there is no record of anyone making a case at this time against this proposed division of Germany into national zones of occupation.

Soon after receiving these instructions, Winant returned to Washington to advise the President that if he held out for the third provision (getting the northwest zone for the U.S.), he would be unable to obtain agreement on the first and second. Evidently the President agreed to permit Winant to agree to the first, reserving the U.S. position in the second and third,

because on 1 June 1944 Winant advised the EAC that the U.S. accepted the western boundary of the Soviet zone.<sup>1</sup>

#### J. DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES THEN AND NOW

This is one of several junctures at which one might judge, reasonably but far from surely, at this point the die was cast. It seems appropriate therefore to pause to remind ourselves of the difference of perspective on these issues then and now. Lord Strang, the Permanent Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs who was the British representative in EAC, later explained in his memoirs that the omission of specific provisions for access to Berlin in the EAC draft of occupation agreements was due to the assumption they held, when working on the plans in 1944, that:

... there would be a central German authority competent to sign the terms of surrender and to exercise a measure of jurisdiction over the whole country, subject to the overriding control of the Commanders-in-Chief. This would have involved, as the British delegation saw it, some free movement for Germans from zone to zone and from western zones to the capital. It would also have meant, as we saw it, freedom of movement for all proper purposes for allied military and civilian staffs in Germany. It was not an expectation that the zones would be sealed off one from another. (This was a Soviet conception which only became apparent in the late summer of 1945, when the occupation was an accomplished fact.) It seemed to us therefore that any necessary arrangements for transit could be made on a military basis by the Commanders-in-Chief when the time came.<sup>2</sup>

This is a reasonably clear expression of how this problem looked to a well-informed and experienced diplomat, who was certainly not characteristically gullible, and who certainly was not a friend to Russian interests at the expense of those of the United Kingdom, or of the U.K. and the USA. This expression of opinion refers mainly to Berlin. Concerning the

---

<sup>1</sup> Franklin, "Zonal Boundaries and Access to Berlin," pp. 18-19.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Strang, Home and Abroad (London, 1956), p. 215.

Soviet zone as a whole, it looked like a bargain for the West at that time. While the Russians were advancing all along the eastern front the Normandy landings had not yet taken place, and we were still held up south of Rome by difficult terrain.

In examining past events, it is important to keep in mind that what at the time is best described as a failure to foresee the future may later appear to be a grievous and perhaps even an inexcusable error in judgment.<sup>1</sup> It is a good question where the limits of prudent foresight (which it is reasonable to expect of our statesmen and diplomats) leaves off, and where what amounts to prophetic capacities (that it is not reasonable to expect of them) begins. But it is a question, also, for which there is no ready and confident answer, because the advantages of hindsight are not only great, but beyond full recognition and measure. We may, however, take note of the kind of questions we might well have addressed ourselves to then -- and at other times when large international issues are at stake -- in hope that the examination of these questions might turn our attention to important considerations that tend to be overlooked so long as we concentrate attention on the issues most immediately at hand.

What will the resolution of issues currently in contention likely do to the current balance and alignment of national powers? What new issues may be created thereby? If there is a new balance, how long may it last? What inherent trends,

---

<sup>1</sup> In this connection it is perhaps well to consider that as late as 1 July 1944, Winston Churchill, whose political foresight has generally been rated very highly, wrote to Marshal Stalin (responding to the latter's congratulations on the capture of Cherbourg by British and American forces), expressing his hope that the Russian armies would gain momentum in their advance, "pulverizing the German armies which stand between you and Warsaw, and afterwards Berlin." (Correspondence Between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Presidents of the USA and the Prime Minister of Great Britain During the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945, Vol. I, p. 233.)

drives, goals, developments currently restrained or immature, are likely to survive and grow and assume much greater importance in the world following the resolution of immediate issues? Being as realistic as possible about the nature, strength and persistence of all factors involved in these questions, then let us ask ourselves to describe a plausible situation and alignment of all of the nations and parties involved in the current issue for a period about a generation after the resolution of that current issue.

It would, of course, be fatuous to expect such questions could be answered -- ever. Responses to them would not only be diverse, but sometimes contradictory. But it would direct explicit attention, that could be subjected to rational examination and for conformity to ascertainable fact, to important areas of policy determination that otherwise are left to chance or to unexamined and even unconscious assumption. In the specific case we are examining, consideration of historical relationships between Russia and Germany and the lesser states of Central Europe would surely have alerted us, among other things, to the high probability, with the total defeat of Germany, of the problems that seemed to surprise us in the aftermath of German defeat.

The one recorded case of foresight resembling prescience on the specific subject of zonal arrangements is recounted by Robert Murphy in his memoirs. He recalls that while he was in Washington from 4-12 September 1944 to be briefed for his new assignment as Political Advisor on German Affairs to General Eisenhower, he met his old friend James Riddleberger -- a senior Foreign Service officer -- and discussed with him the draft agreement on German occupation about to be agreed upon, in Quebec, by the President and Prime Minister. Murphy's account follows:

James Riddleberger, while studying this map, had also taken cognizance of this omission [of provision for Anglo-American forces to reach Berlin] and he proposed that the occupation zones should converge upon Berlin like slices of pie, thus providing each zone with its own frontage in the capital city. Nothing ever came of this ingenious suggestion, however, and sometime later I asked Riddleberger what had happened. He explained that he had been adamantly opposed to putting the American sector one hundred miles behind the Soviet lines in Berlin, but that Winant had been equally vigorous in defending the plan. They 'had a head-on clash,' but, of course, the Ambassador was in a much more influential position than the career officer. Riddleberger told me: 'Winant accused me of not having any faith in Soviet intentions and I replied that on this he was exactly right. In an effort to find some way out, I then suggested that the three zones should converge in Berlin as the center of a pie, but the idea got nowhere because Winant was very much opposed to it.'

#### K. SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR BERLIN ADMINISTRATION ACCEPTED

On 1 July 1944 Winant informed the Secretary of State that the Soviet delegation to the EAC had proposed zones of occupation (sectors) of Berlin, and a joint administration of Greater Berlin, with an Inter-Allied Authority -- a Kommandatura -- consisting of the U.S., U.K. and USSR commandants, to administer the city. A northeast sector of eight districts (Russian), and northwest and southwest sectors of six districts each were proposed. A cable went out from State to Winant on 4 July approving the plan in principle. There is no evidence of any official or agency opposing the Soviet proposal.

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert [D.] Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors (Garden City, New York, 1964), p. 231. Murphy and Riddleberger were friends, whereas Murphy is consistently uncomplimentary of Winant. One may reserve judgment therefore on the fairness of his representation of Winant's position. But there is no evident reason to discredit the account of Riddleberger's ideas about desirable zonal arrangements except to note that there was a great difference between such an abstract idea of zones and a practical delineation of administrable zones, let alone their acceptability.

#### L. THE BASIC SETTLEMENT OF NORTHWEST ZONE CONTROVERSY

Roosevelt's mind continued to dwell on getting the northwest zone of Germany for the U.S., but he seems to have been under increasing pressure from his subordinates to soften his insistency on this point. On 31 July 1944 Secretary of War Stimson noted in his diary:

I had Jack McCloy and Ed Stettinius to dinner and we talked over the pending negotiations [at the upcoming second Quebec Conference -- OCTAGON].... The most pressing thing is to get the President to decide on which part of Germany will be occupied by American troops. He is hell-bent to occupy the northern portion. We all think that that is a mistake -- that it will only get us into a head-on collision with the British.<sup>1</sup>

A couple of days later (on 2 August) Acting Secretary of State Stettinius proposed to Roosevelt a compromise-proposal, concurred in by the Secretaries of War and Navy, whereby (1) the U.K. would agree to occupy France, Italy and the Balkans if such occupation turned out to be necessary; (2) the U.S. would control the northwest German ports, and the Low Countries jointly with the U.K.; (3) the U.S. would occupy the southwest and the British the northwest zone of Germany. The following day the President, who at the time was in the Pacific, turned down the proposal.

#### M. THE PROTOCOL OF 12 SEPTEMBER 1944

Meanwhile in London the EAC drew up, during the summer of 1944, a draft tripartite protocol on zones of occupation and administration. It embodied the agreement on zonal delineation that the British and Russians had reached in their proposal and counterproposal of 15 January and 18 February. It specified Russian occupation of the eastern zone (the U.S. had tentatively agreed to this), but in deference to the Anglo-American deadlock

---

<sup>1</sup> Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service in Peace and War, pp. 568-569.

over the western areas did not designate which nations would occupy the northwest and southwest zones. It specified the joint tripartite administration of Greater Berlin, and divided Berlin into three sectors, following the Russian proposal of 1 July, which the U.S. had tentatively agreed to. But again, although the eastern sector was assigned to the Russians out of deference to Anglo-American differences, assignment of the western sectors was left blank. On 12 September 1944, the "Protocol on Zones of Occupation, and Administration of the 'Greater Berlin' Area" was unanimously adopted by the three representatives to the EAC, "with the exception of the allocation of the northwestern and southwestern zones of occupation in Germany and the northwestern and southern parts of 'Greater Berlin,' which requires further consideration and joint agreement by the governments of the USA, the U.K and the USSR."<sup>1</sup>

This was done on the eve of the OCTAGON Conference in Quebec. It was evidently a draft of this agreement that Robert Murphy remembered discussing with James Riddleberger, recounted above, before the former's departure for London on 12 September. This indicates that the draft protocol was being examined by some echelons at State before its acceptance by EAC, and before convening the OCTAGON. At this conference, Roosevelt finally agreed to accept the southwest zone, leaving the northwest zone to the British, approving the EAC delineation of zones except for minor changes as between the northwest and southwest zones.

The details of the deal between Roosevelt and Churchill that brought this about are not entirely clear. The most obvious concession from Churchill, evidently judged essential though it is not clear how important it was considered as a

---

<sup>1</sup> Documents on Germany, 1944-1961 (Committee on Foreign Relations/ U.S. Senate, 87th Congress, First Sssion, GPO, Washington, D.C., 1961), pp. 1-3; Franklin, "Zonal Boundaries and Berlin Access," pp. 21-22.



quid pro quo, was a pledge to grant to the U.S. the control of the ports of Bremen and Bremerhaven, with staging areas immediately adjacent thereto, and guarantee of free access to these ports across the British zone from the American zone in the southwest. Churchill's memoirs suggest that his impression was that Roosevelt finally yielded, more than to anything else, to the advice of his military advisors; however, they also support the idea that tentative British acceptance in principle of the Morgenthau Plan was part of the bargain. Still another possibility, cited by the British official historian of British grand strategy, is that Roosevelt's objections were removed, in part, by a British statement of intent to accept responsibility for southeastern Europe and Austria.<sup>1</sup>

#### N. THE "MORGENTHAU PLAN" AND THE DEAL FOR THE NORTHWEST ZONE

The "Morgenthau Plan" usurped the attention of American policy makers in Germany for many months beginning in August of 1944, distracting from orderly and informed staff consideration of zonal arrangements and other aspects of occupation policy. Furthermore, President Roosevelt became a temporary convert to this craze just before the OCTAGON Conference, and Churchill's reluctant acquiescence to the Plan was, as noted above, part of the Roosevelt-Churchill deal over the northwest zone.

Henry Morgenthau, Jr., a long-time Hyde Park neighbor, personal friend of the President, and Secretary of the Treasury, owed his power to influence foreign policy so decisively to Roosevelt's predilection to operate informally and out of channels. Morgenthau became interested in occupation plans on 5 August 1944 while en route to the U.K. to deal with other

---

<sup>1</sup> John Ehrman, Grand Strategy, V, p. 516; Matloff, Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1943-44, p. 511.

matters. An aide, Harry Dexter White, showed him a memo approved the day before by the Executive Committee on Economic Foreign Policy, which suggested comparatively mild reparations demands in Germany. Morgenthau proceeded thereafter to develop very rapidly his own very different ideas for reducing Germany to an agricultural and pastoral state. He sought in conversations to sell the idea to Eisenhower, Churchill and Eden, among others. Just before returning to Washington on 17 August, while talking to Eden, the British Foreign Minister showed Morgenthau records of the Teheran Conference (wherein Morgenthau encountered a record of Roosevelt's support of harsh treatment of Germany -- especially partition). Soon after returning to Washington, Morgenthau saw Hull, who had never been permitted to see the records of the Teheran Conference. On 25 August, Morgenthau showed to the President a copy of the Army's Handbook for Military Government of Germany. Some marked passages plus Morgenthau's own oral statements induced the President to rebuke the War Department sharply for the mild treatment prescribed for Germany by the Handbook. In the next few days, Morgenthau's aides developed the original "Program to Prevent Germany from Starting World War III," by partition, annexation, internationalization, and above all de-industrialization. A State-War-Treasury group, spurred on by the Presidential rebuke of the Handbook, worked from 2 September on to complete a draft, intended to be approved by the three departments, before the OCTAGON Conference. Stimson tried to oppose the measure, but Hull vacillated. Morgenthau won out, for he succeeded in getting Roosevelt to initial a preliminary Treasury draft of the plan. Although the President was later to have second thoughts, and to have a new Inter-Departmental group work at a draft acceptable to all three departments, at the time he went to Quebec to meet Churchill, he was an enthusiast for the uncompromised Morgenthau approach.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Snell, Wartime Origins of the East-West Dilemma Over Germany, chapter on "The Morgenthau Plan," pp. 64-93; Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors, p. 227.

The President took the Secretary of the Treasury with him to the Quebec meeting, as his only nonmilitary foreign policy advisor. Churchill recalled, in his memoirs:

I had been surprised to find when I arrived at Quebec that the President was accompanied by Mr. Morgenthau, the Secretary of the United States Treasury, though neither the Secretary of State nor Harry Hopkins was present. But I was glad to see Morgenthau, as we were anxious to discuss financial arrangements between our two countries for the period between the conquest of Germany and the defeat of the Japanese. The President and his Secretary of the Treasury were however much more concerned about the treatment of Germany after the war. They felt very strongly that military strength rested on industrial strength. We had seen ... how easy it was for a highly industrialized Germany to arm herself and threaten her neighbors .... The United Kingdom had lost so many overseas investments that she could only pay her way when peace came by greatly increasing her exports, so that for economic as well as military reasons we ought to restrict German industry and encourage German agriculture. At first we violently opposed the idea. But the President, with Mr. Morgenthau -- from whom we had much to ask -- were so insistent that in the end we agreed to consider it.

The so-called Morgenthau Plan, which I had not time to examine in detail, seems to have carried these ideas to an ultralogical conclusion .... All this was of course subject to the full consideration of the War Cabinet, and in the event with my full accord, the idea of 'pastoralizing' Germany did not survive.<sup>1</sup>

#### O. THE MECHANISM OF THE OCTAGON AGREEMENT ON ZONES

At their first OCTAGON meeting, the CCS agreed to refer the question of the northwest zone to the President and the Prime Minister. Churchill wrote in his memoirs that:

... The British staffs thought the original plan [i.e., for the British forces to occupy the northwest, and the U.S. forces the southwest] the better, and also saw many inconveniences and complications in making the change. I had the impression that their American colleagues rather shared their view. At the Quebec Conference in September 1944 we reached a firm agreement between us.

---

<sup>1</sup> Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 156-157.

The President, evidently convinced by the military view, had a large map unfolded on his knees. One afternoon, most of the Combined Chiefs of Staff being present, he agreed verbally with me that the existing arrangement should stand, subject to the United States armies having a nearby direct outlet to the sea across the British zone. Bremen and its subsidiary Bremerhaven seemed to meet the American needs, and their control over this zone was adopted ....<sup>1</sup>

Changes were agreed to, which Churchill neglected to mention in this passage, in the boundaries between the northwest and the southwest zones as proposed in the EAC draft. These consisted mainly in the transfer of the province of Hessen-Nassau from the northwest to the southwest zone, and of a smaller area west of the Rhine--the Saarland and the Palatinate, from the southwest to the northwest zone. (The latter change was intended, perhaps, to provide an area that might later be occupied by the French.)

The instrument whereby the agreement was made a matter of official record was a memo drawn up by Adm. Leahy on instructions from President Roosevelt, formally approved on the final day of the Conference, 16 September, first by the JCS and immediately thereafter by the CCS. The main provisions were:

- British to occupy Germany west of Rhine and east of Rhine north of line following northern border of Hessen and Nassau to the area allocated to Russia;
- U.S. to occupy Germany east of Rhine and south of line Koblenz -- northern border of Hessen and Nassau west of area allocated to Russia;
- Control of ports of Bremen and Bremerhaven and necessary staging areas in immediate vicinity vested in commander of U.S. zone;
- U.S. to have access through west and northwest ports and free passage through British zone;
- Delineation of specifics of U.S. control of Bremen-Bremerhaven area and of U.S. passage through British zone to be reached later.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 509-510.

<sup>2</sup> Ehrman, Grand Strategy, V, p. 516; Leahy, I Was There, pp. 262-263.

## P. SECOND STAGE OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN HASSLE

This CCS agreement was a partial agreement between the American Joint Chiefs and the British Joint Chiefs only concerning certain details relating to the occupation of the two western zones. What was needed was an agreement between all three governments -- the U.S., U.K. and USSR -- concerning both eastern and western zones and Berlin. The EAC draft of 12 September 1944 was addressed to this need. But inasmuch as its text delineated in detail the boundaries of the northwest and the southwest zones, an amending agreement to delineate the boundaries as changed at Quebec was necessary before final governmental approval. In addition to this, there was the matter of the fifth provision of the agreement, which explicitly reserved certain details at issue between the U.S. and the U.K. for later negotiation. This negotiation, as it turned out, was to be conducted at the military-technical staff level where there was little knowledge of, and no responsibility at all for, the political aspects and larger issues of the occupational and zonal arrangements as a whole.

The unfinished work of the CCS agreement was referred to EAC for incorporation into a formal document which the three governments could sign. Following the instructions concerning the delineation of zones met no obstacles. But the problem as a whole was made difficult by the fact that the American and British military read very different meanings into the words of the Quebec agreement concerning "control" of the ports, and concerning the kind and degree of control of rails and highways across the British zone implied by "access." There appears to have been little progress made through the last half of September and the month of October. However, in mid-October Churchill and Eden visited Moscow, on which occasion it was decided to invite France, on 11 November, to become a member of the EAC. This was interpreted to mean it would be necessary to complete the tripartite agreements already entered into before

France actually joined the EAC, or else face the prospect of having to renegotiate everything. With the American and British delegations to EAC acting much like middlemen between the War Department in Washington and the War Office in London, an agreement was finally rushed through on 14 November 1944 that settled, clearly enough, the delineation of zones, but still left for later decision the details of agreement concerning control of the ports and the specific details of access. (France joined the EAC on 27 November 1944.) The language of the "agreement" on these points was as follows:

For the purpose of facilitating communications between the South-Western Zone and the sea, the Commander-in-Chief of the United States forces in the South-Western Zone will:

(a) exercise such control of the ports of Bremen and Bremerhaven and the necessary staging areas in the vicinity thereof as may be agreed hereafter by the United Kingdom and United States military authorities to be necessary to meet his requirements;

(b) enjoy such transit facilities through the North-Western Zone as may be agreed hereafter by the United Kingdom and United States military authorities to be necessary to his requirements.<sup>1</sup> [Emphasis supplied.]

The matters left for specification "as may be agreed hereafter" were not resolved until the time of the Yalta Conference, roughly two and a half months later.

#### Q. THE RUSSIAN COMMENT ON ACCESS RIGHTS

In the midst of the Anglo-American hassle leading to the "Amending Agreement" of 14 November 1944, the Russian delegate

---

<sup>1</sup>This quote is from "Amending Agreement on Zones of Occupation and Administration of the 'Greater Berlin' Area, November 14, 1944," pp. 3-5 in Documents on Germany, 1944-1961. The account of these events generally follows that of the participant in them, then in EAC in London, as recorded in Mosely, "The Occupation of Germany: New Light on How the Zones Were Drawn," pp. 178-180, and summarized in Franklin, "Zonal Boundaries and Access to Berlin," p. 22.

to EAC (he was the Ambassador to the U.K.) returned from Moscow. He evidently desired to get on with the business of getting an occupation agreement, and indicated some impatience with the inability of his Anglo-American colleagues to reach agreement. According to a report to the Secretary of State from Winant on 6 November, the Russian Ambassador, commenting on the issue of American desire for access to the southwest zone across the British-occupied area, "assured that similar arrangements will be made for transit facilities across Russian-occupied territory to the Berlin zone for British and American forces and control personnel."<sup>1</sup> The fact that this elicited no attention except as a comment on what we considered the intransigence of the British should be read -- so far as Berlin is concerned -- much less surely as a lost opportunity to obtain guarantees than as an indication of how fully it was assumed at that time by practically everyone actually involved in negotiations, including the Russians, that agreement upon joint occupation of Berlin carried with it the right of access to Berlin, provided that the military progress of the war continued as expected. Along with this assumption went the companion notion that the occupation would be a short-term affair because some sort of a more permanent peace settlement would be worked out soon that would replace the temporary occupation arrangements being negotiated. Under these assumptions, the right of access was not really questioned and therefore not made subject to negotiation, although the specifics of access were considered subject to explicit understandings and arrangements, but at the operational level, not at the policy-making level.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Msg. No. 9643, Winant to SecState, 6 November 1944.

<sup>2</sup>Franklin, "Zonal Boundaries and Berlin Access," pp. 24-26, describes these matters authoritatively from his close knowledge of the documentary sources.

The EAC agreement of 14 November 1944 was not legally binding. To be so, it needed approval of the governments, not just of their representatives to the EAC. The British government registered its approval in EAC on 5 December. But because of the dissatisfaction within the War Department over the evasive language insisted upon by the British concerning control of port areas and transit across the British zone, final American approval was not given. The Soviet government deferred giving its approval until both the U.K. and the U.S. had approved. The JCS wanted the settlement formalized by a CCS paper, and this became a prerequisite.

#### R. THE ZONAL AGREEMENTS FINALLY OFFICIALLY APPROVED

Meanwhile, the German counteroffensive in the Ardennes temporarily stalled the advance into Germany from the west, but the Russian forces had continued to advance in the south, and on 12 January began their big winter offensive on the central front that was soon to bring them within about 50 miles of Berlin. Both Ambassador Winant and Assistant Secretary of War McCloy by late January 1945 became worried lest the Russian forces advance westward, all the way across the agreed eastern zone, and keep on going. With no legally binding agreement on zones, they might well gobble up all the German territory they could seize. It seemed very important, therefore, to get a fully authenticated zonal agreement with all possible haste.

Evidently it was considered impossible to get Presidential approval without going through the JCS. En route to Yalta and Malta, Harry Hopkins stopped over in London, where Winant urged him to expedite the agreement. Hopkins carried this message to Caserta, where on 30 January he met Stettinius, in whose company he proceeded the next day to Malta, where McCloy gave his support to the idea. On 1 February, Stettinius conferred with Eden, and thereafter each undertook to prod his nation's



military chiefs into agreement. Later the same day, with the approval of General Marshall and Field Marshal Alan Brooke, Stettinius authorized Winant to register formal U.S. approval in the EAC of the Protocol of 12 September 1944 as amended by the not entirely conclusive "Amending Agreement" of 14 November 1944, and along with the "Agreement on Control Machinery" also of 14 November 1944. This was accomplished the next day, 2 February 1945. On 6 February 1945, the formal Russian approval was registered, and the zonal agreement became legally binding.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Documents on Germany, 1944-1961, pp. 1-10; Foreign Relations of the United States/Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945, (Washington, 1955), pp. 201, 498-499, 978; Franklin, "Zonal Boundaries and Access to Berlin," p. 23; Stettinius, Roosevelt and the Russians, p. 56; Mosely, "Occupation of Germany," pp. 181-182.

#### IV. ANTICLIMAX - THE IMPLEMENTING DECISIONS

##### A. THE NATURE OF THE ISSUE AFTER APPROVAL OF THE EAC PROTOCOL

With formalized national approval of the EAC Protocol of 12 September 1944 completed, the nature of the issue, and the means of pursuing our interests, underwent major changes. We had committed ourselves to occupation of a Berlin enclave within a Soviet occupied zone, and the remaining problem for us, as far as Berlin was concerned, was access. We had proceeded, up to this point, on the assumption that agreement on tripartite occupation and administration of Berlin implicitly carried with it the right of access, and this interpretation, as a generality, was evidently shared by the Russians as well. The issue, however, was not the abstract principle of access, but rather the specific conditions of access. This was an area of great latitude, because some regulation of traffic to and from Berlin by the power controlling the surrounding area was normal and necessary. But this regulation might, through administrative measures, be made to vary in its effect from complete freedom of access to near denial of access without any overt rejection of the principle of right of access. The heart of the issue was reduced, therefore, to a matter of administrative or operational detail.

There was a resultant and corresponding change in the nature of the means remaining open to us to pursue our interests in this matter. We had reached the EAC agreement through the process of negotiation, a process that was familiar to us, that

was forthright, legalistic, and that ended up with a document we accepted at face value, and intended fully to be faithful to both in the letter and in spirit. The question now was the interpretation that the Russians would give to this (and to other agreements and understandings, and how they might maneuver for advantage without overt transgression of formal agreements. Would they be faithful to what we believed was the spirit of the agreement? This question was not negotiable, as it turned out, in the same legalistic way. (Perhaps if disagreements between Churchill and Stalin over eastern Europe had not developed so sharply, this might have been possible, but this was almost an impossibility on its face, in view of the grave conflicts between the national interests of Russia, as Stalin saw them, and Churchill's commitments to right wing regimes in the border states of Russia. We were caught in this conflict and also in an ages old situation in which it was power that counted, not persuasion; pressure, not reason; threat, not good will. We had power, as never before, and we knew how to use it to defeat an avowed enemy in open conflict. But use of that power to extract concessions from those with whom we were not at war was alien to our traditions and largely outside of our experience.

Many of our difficulties in policy and decision making in the spring of 1945, as the war was coming to an end, resulted from the inappropriateness of our national traditions and attitudes when confronted, more or less for the first time, by the harsh realities of power politics. Probably this element of our national character, more than anything procedural, was our greatest weakness. We were not intellectually prepared for the regroupings and the realignments, and the consequent maneuvering for advantage, that adjustment of the power balance to the destruction of German national power would necessitate.

## **B. THE BEGINNING BREACH BETWEEN EAST AND WEST**

Very soon after the signing of the EAC agreement, the East-West amity which had prevailed since the Normandy landings was rapidly replaced by mounting distrust and suspicion. Within a few weeks after the Yalta Conference, much of the basis upon which our policy calculations had previously been founded was removed. We were confronted with a problem of adjustment to new circumstances; and a great deal depended upon how promptly and correctly we perceived the nature and scope of these changes and adjusted our goals and actions accordingly.

There had always been those who did not believe East-West amity would endure beyond the defeat of the common enemy. This apprehension was shared by many, and for many quite diverse reasons. But if there were many who reasoned that, with the complete defeat of Germany and Japan -- which by the beginning of 1945 was a practical certainty -- there would surely follow a new balance and a new alignment of the world powers, they had no hand in formulation of current programs. Rather, in America, those who were most concerned with the post-war world were the ones who directed their thoughts toward the establishment of a new world order -- the U.N. By contrast, the formulation of operational policies and decisions took place almost entirely within the immediate context of day-to-day events. Apparently no one with access to high authority raised any questions about the continuation of current alignments and power balances or other long-term considerations of practical politics that might be involved in the way the war was waged. The implicit political assumption underlying these practical everyday decisions was that there would be no basic change, even though nearly half the world's power base was on the verge of being destroyed.

The published official records of the Yalta Conference, and the memoirs of participants therein, indicate strongly that, so

far as problems of occupation and administration of Germany were concerned, more time was devoted to the subject of a zone for the French than to anything else. Of such issues as access, there is no record of any mention.

However, on 6 February, the same day Russia approved the EAC agreement, the U.S. Joint Staff Planners completed a paper intended for transmittal first to the British Chiefs of Staff and then to the Soviet General Staff, pointing out that Berlin would be isolated from the American zone and proposing that the principle of free transit for American forces be explicitly recognized by the other occupying powers. On the following day the JCS decided the paper should be broadened to include Vienna, and this resulted in a delay that caused the paper not to be submitted to the British or Russians at Yalta. Later in the month the desired revision was completed. This revision was more encompassing in its language, proposing explicit acceptance by each of the three powers of the principle of free transit for forces of all three nations across all zonal boundaries, explicitly including areas of joint occupation such as Berlin and Vienna. The JCS transmitted this draft to the British Chiefs of Staff, and to the Russian General Staff through the American Military Mission in Moscow, on 27 February. The British signified their formal approval on 9 March 1945. There is no record of any reply from the Russian General Staff, nor indeed of any acknowledgements to the JCS from the American Military Mission of having received the proposal for transmission. Whether or not any declaration of adherence to the principle of access was lost by this failure, and whether or not any declaration of abstract principle, at this time, would have had much ultimate effect, is a matter for conjecture. On the other hand, de facto access to both Berlin and Vienna was granted by the Russians three months later, though rather grudgingly, as will later be noted. On the other hand, East-West relations by early March were being chilled by rapidly growing

mutual suspicions, and failure to respond may have reflected unreadiness to make explicit acceptance of the principle.

The latent suspicions between East and West -- at first mainly between Stalin and Churchill -- that were presented but suppressed at Yalta, burst into the open in the exchanges between the Big Three very soon afterward. Russian management of the problem of a Provisional Government for Poland, in which they refused to admit to their own Soviet-sponsored Lubin Provisional Government any of the Polish leaders favored and supported by the West, was the most important issue, leading to bitter accusations on both sides of the other's failure to observe the terms of the Yalta agreement.

But there were many other points of dispute. Both British and American requests for accelerated return of POWs liberated by advancing Russian forces produced embittered exchanges. In this case, Stalin's reply to Churchill on 23 March 1945, to a wholly polite personal request, consisted mainly of this curt insolence: "I have received your message. As regards British prisoners of war, your fears are groundless. They have better conditions than the Soviet prisoners of war in British camps where in a number of cases they were ill-treated and even beaten..."

Only a fortnight after the Yalta "Declaration on Liberated Europe" whereby the U.S., U.K., and USSR had agreed to "concert during the temporary period of instability in liberated Europe the policies of their three governments in assisting the peoples liberated from the domination of Nazi Germany and the peoples of the former Axis satellite states of Europe to solve by democratic means their pressing political and economic problems," Russia began to act unilaterally and high-handedly in Rumania to install a government of Russian choice. Three days after a Rumanian request on 24 February for a meeting of the Allied Control Council on Rumania, the Russian Deputy Foreign

Minister Vyshinski demanded that the King of Rumania dismiss the current government of General Radescu. While Molotov in Moscow evaded Ambassador Harriman's request for concerted action, Vyshinski in Bucharest backed up by Marshal Malinovski forced the replacement, on 7 March, of the Radescu government by the Russian-selected Groza government. These events were disturbing to both Roosevelt and Churchill. However, Churchill, who seems to have been the most disturbed, was seriously handicapped so far as lodging strong protests directly to the Russians was concerned because while he and Eden were in Moscow in October of 1944, Churchill had struck an informal bargain with Stalin whereby the latter accepted Churchill's proposal to recognize that Russia had 90 percent interest in Rumania against 10 percent for all other nations, in return for Russian recognition that Great Britain had 90 percent interest in Greece. Although the evidence suggests that in this case Churchill was playing imperialist power politics as much as Stalin, and farther from home, it was the Russian actions that constituted an overt rupture of our understanding of what had been agreed upon, and of our standards of overt political morality.<sup>1</sup>

Negotiations in Switzerland, initiated on 8 March in Zurich with Allen Dulles by the chief of the S.S. in Italy for the surrender of Marshal Kesselring's forces in Italy to the combined British-American forces under General Alexander in Caserta, although reported to Molotov by the British Ambassador on 21 March, were treated by both Molotov and Stalin, in letters to Churchill and Roosevelt, as a treacherous effort to divert remaining Nazi military forces from the Western to the Eastern front.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ehrman, Grand Strategy, VI, pp. 104-106; James F. Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, (New York, 1947), pp. 49-52; Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 226-228, 419-421.

Another issue developed when an Anglo-American intelligence report, transmitted to the Russians first by the English on 12 February 1945, then eight days later by General Marshall through General Deane, turned out to be false. The report said the Germans were forming two groups to counterattack on the Eastern front, one in Pomerania and one northeast of Vienna, the second of these including the 6th S.S. Panzer Army. When the attack came, which indeed included the 6th S.S. Panzer Army, it occurred far to the southeast, in the Lake Balaton area. When Stalin, in personal letters to Churchill and Roosevelt told of this, he made it unmistakably evident that he suspected the information was deliberately false. It was with respect to these manifestations that early in April Churchill warned Roosevelt, "We must always be anxious lest the brutality of the Russian messages does not foreshadow some deep change of policy for which they are preparing."<sup>1</sup>

It was in this atmosphere of growing suspicion between East and West that the two major decisions we are concerned with were made in the spring of 1945. The first of these was the decision not to try to take Berlin. The second was the decision not to use the territory within the occupation zone allocated to Russia but overrun by Anglo-American troops for bargaining purposes, to extract from the Russians something they might not grant otherwise -- including explicit guarantees of access to Berlin. Both of these were much more complex than they seem to be when stated simply. In both cases our British Allies --

---

<sup>1</sup>Correspondence Between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Presidents of the USA and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain During the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945, (2 Vols., Moscow 1957), Vol. I (Churchill, pp. 306 and following; Vol. 2 (Roosevelt), pp. 194-213. Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, Chap. 6, "The Polish Dispute," pp. 418-439, and Chap. 7, "Soviet Suspicions," pp. 440-454. John Ehrman, Grand Strategy, Vol. VI, October 1944-August 1945, pp. 137-138.



especially Churchill -- sought to induce us to use military pressure for political gain in a way that at the time was alien to us.

#### C. THE DECISION NOT TO TRY TO TAKE BERLIN

Near the end of March 1945 General Eisenhower decided, on strictly military grounds, not to make Berlin a major primary objective, but rather, immediately following the encirclement of the enemy forces in the Ruhr, to drive southeastward on a line to the south of Berlin, on an axis of Erfurt-Leipzig-Dresden. This decision, and the manner in which it was made and announced, and the subordinate decisions that followed it, immediately became a subject of bitter controversy between the Western Allies. The incident has been recounted in several historical accounts, and, as a subject of controversy, has been described in the memoirs of the two principals. This paper will relate only the highlights of this generally well-known story, and concentrate upon those features of the affair that are pertinent to our current interests.<sup>1</sup>

The main facts are as follows. On 28 March 1945 the Supreme Allied Commander, General Eisenhower, sent to Marshal

---

<sup>1</sup> The main secondary accounts are: Forrest C. Pogue, The Supreme Command, Chapters 23, 24 "The Drive to the Elbe," pp. 441-474; also by the same author, "The Decision to Halt at the Elbe," pp. 479-492 in Command Decisions, edited by Kent Roberts Greenfield, (OCMH, Washington, D. C. in 1960); John Ehrman, Grand Strategy, Vol. VI, "Dresden or Berlin?", pp. 131-151; Smith, The Defense of Berlin, Chapter 3, "The Military Decision to Halt at the Elbe," pp. 34-53. Churchill included his version of the affair in Triumph and Tragedy, Chapter 8, "Western Strategic Divergencies," pp. 55-70; Eisenhower's account of the matter is included in Chapter 20, "Assault and Encirclement," pp. 387-403 of Crusade in Europe (New York, 1948); there is further mention of the matter in the memoirs of Field Marshal Montgomery, Admiral Leahy, and General Bradley, among others.

Stalin a message describing his probable future strategy, which message stated General Eisenhower's strategic decision and described in summary form the circumstances and the reasons behind it. The substance of the message had not been taken up with the CCS, and evidently came as a surprise to them. The only explicit prior understanding within the CCS had been that after the Ruhr encirclement a generally eastward thrust would be launched from the Kassel area. Berlin had been designated, early, as the main prize, and there had been no explicit disavowal of this. The British Chiefs favored this strongly, also favored the route across the north German plain. Their assumption that this continued to be the strategy had been strengthened, the very day before they received an information copy of Eisenhower's message to Stalin, by a signal from Marshal Montgomery on 27 March that he had ordered the 2d British and 9th U.S. Armies to advance "with utmost speed and drive" to the Elbe on the Hamburg-Magdeburg sector.<sup>1</sup>

Eisenhower's message to Stalin, which was addressed to the U.S. Military Mission in Moscow for transmission to the Russian leader, read as follows:

Our operations are now reaching a stage where it is essential I should know the Russians' plans in order to achieve a most rapid success. Will you, therefore, transmit a personal message from me to Marshal Stalin, and do anything you can to assist in getting a full reply?

Personal message to Marshal Stalin from General Eisenhower.

(1) My immediate operations are designed to encircle and destroy the enemy forces defending the Ruhr, and to isolate that area from the rest of Germany. This will be accomplished by developing around the north of Ruhr and from Frankfurt through Kassel line until I close the ring. The enemy thus enclosed will then be mopped up.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ehrman, Grand Strategy, VI, p. 131.

(2) I estimate that this phase of operations will end late in April or even earlier, and my next task will be to divide the remaining enemy forces by joining hands with your forces.

(3) For my forces the best axis on which to achieve this junction would be Erfurt-Leipzig-Dresden. I believe, moreover, that this is the area to which main German governmental departments are being moved. It is along this axis that I propose to make my main effort. In addition, as soon as the situation allows, a secondary advance will be made to effect a junction with your forces in the area Regensburg-Linz, thereby preventing the consolidation of German resistance in Redoubt in Southern Germany.

(4) Before deciding firmly on my plans, it is, I think, most important that they should be coordinated as closely as possible with yours both as to direction and timing. Could you, therefore, tell me your intentions and let me know how far the proposals outlined in this message conform to your probable action.

(5) If we are to complete the destruction of German armies without delay, I regard it as essential that we coordinate our action and make every effort to perfect the liaison between our advancing forces. I am prepared to send officers to you for this purpose.<sup>1</sup>

The British reacted in strong and bitter dissent. Basically, they considered it was an unwise decision on the basis of military strategy (and their opinion must be viewed in the context of the long standing British preference for a concentrated attack on a comparatively narrow front over the north German plain then descending on Berlin from the northwest, versus the American preferred strategy for an attack on a much broader front across central Germany). Even more important, the British Chiefs felt very strongly -- even vehemently -- that the decision should not have been made without prior consultation at the Combined Chiefs of Staff level (which would have led to the seat of government level) because this strategic decision was viewed as

---

<sup>1</sup> As given in Ehrman, Grand Strategy, VI, p. 132 -- evidently taken from the information copy received by the British Chiefs.

a political decision as much as a military decision. They did not make an explicit point of the matter, but they took note of the fact that Eisenhower's deputy as Supreme Allied Commander, Air Marshal Tedder, was not informed of the message. They objected most strongly to General Eisenhower's breaking the news directly to the head of the Russian state rather than to the purely military head of the Russian forces (General Antonoff, for instance) and above all doing this without prior approval at the Combined Chiefs of Staff level. Finally, the British were piqued because this strategy tended to give the forces of Marshal Montgomery a minor role, putting the U.S. 9th Army under the control of General Bradley rather than leaving it with the 2nd British Army under Marshal Montgomery.<sup>1</sup>

The message to Stalin was followed by a frantic exchange of messages then between the JCS, the British Chiefs of Staff, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Eisenhower. The heat of the exchange between the JCS and the British Chiefs was such that, at first, the dispute descended to American disparagement of the military contribution of the British Second Army and British belittlement of the competence of General Eisenhower. Churchill backed his military men although he tried to moderate some of their language. Roosevelt, whose powers were rapidly declining and who was less than a fortnight away from death, backed his Joint Chiefs fully in their complete support of all that Eisenhower has done.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> It is very possible they suspected Eisenhower of devious motives also. Herbert Feis, who has written extensively on the diplomacy of this era, and who had personal acquaintance not only with the documentary sources but with many of the personalities involved, conjectured that Eisenhower sent the message directly to Stalin in order to end all chance of further argument with Churchill about taking Berlin. Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin: The War They Waged and the Peace They Sought (Princeton, 1957), p. 603.

<sup>2</sup> There are accounts of this exchange in Pogue, The Supreme Command, pp. 441-445; Ehrman, Grand Strategy, VI, pp. 132-145; Eisenhower, Crusade in Europe, pp. 399-403; Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 457-468; Pogue, "The Decision to Halt at the Elbe," pp. 483-486.

The strategy was not changed. Eventually, Churchill and the British reluctantly went along with the decision, if for no other reason than that there was little else they could do. The only concession that was made to the British objections was that procedures were established whereby General Eisenhower would clear further military messages to Russian military authorities through the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

This decision not to take Berlin has been of lasting interest and has caused considerable controversy mainly because it is recognized to have had far-reaching political results. These results were not foreseen or even considered in the making of the decision. And the decision was later defended, by Eisenhower himself, by the JCS, and by the writer of the official U.S. history of the Supreme Command, on its merits as a military decision made for exclusively military reasons. Within our traditional dichotomy, this seems reasonable enough. The real question, however, is whether it was possible at the time to make an exclusively military decision. In a sense, the main question is answered by the unanimous present judgment that it did have important political consequences.

In his choice of strategy, General Eisenhower was acting strictly according to his directive, fully in accord with the tradition in which he had grown up, and completely in the spirit of the policies that were dominant at the top of the American government. It was for reasons other than national partisanship that he was strongly supported by both the Joint Chiefs of Staff and by the President. The points of interest to us are the reasons why we gravitated to this national decision and the reasons why the English opposed it.

In discussing the decision in his memoirs, General Eisenhower emphasized that he knew that the zonal division of Germany for occupation purposes had already been decided upon, and that he was not influenced by thoughts of any future

division of Germany; rather his decision was dominated by the single aim of speeding a military victory.

I already knew of the Allied political agreements that divided Germany and the post-hostilities occupational zones. The north-south line allotted by that decision to the English and American nations ran from the vicinity of Leubeck, at the eastern base of the Danish peninsula generally southward to the town of Eisenack and on southward to the Austrian border.

This future division of Germany did not influence our military plans for the final conquest of the country. Military plans, I believe, should be devised with the single aim of speeding victory; by later adjustment troops of the several nations could be concentrated into their own national sectors.<sup>1</sup> [Emphasis supplied.]

This is a clear and forthright statement of the prevailing American doctrine which separated military and political affairs. Despite occasional explicit recognition that military possession of territory at the end of hostilities would have political significance, military operations were doctrinally viewed as distinct from politics, planned to achieve military victory, and political arrangements would be made as a separate matter. This was the view not only of Generals Marshall, Eisenhower and Bradley, but also of President Roosevelt and of the principal officials of the State Department. They all believed that the decision was a military one because it concerned the defeat of the German forces, that this was the first thing to accomplish, and that political matters and peacemaking would be accomplished separately, after the military victory had been achieved.

#### **D. THE REDOUBT THAT NEVER WAS**

Contributing to the decision to shift the main direction of the American attack south of Berlin along the Kassel-Leipzig-Dresden axis was the acceptance by the American G-2,

---

<sup>1</sup> Eisenhower, Crusade in Europe, p. 396.

and by General Eisenhower and his staff, of Goebbel's fantastic hoax of the "National Redoubt." General Eisenhower mentioned this in his cable to Marshal Stalin, and in his memoirs written years later he gave considerable importance to "the desirability of penetrating and destroying the so-called National Redoubt." He had feared, so he said, that if it were not promptly prevented, the Nazis would concentrate their most fanatic surviving elements in the mountains of southern Bavaria where they could hold out almost indefinitely against the Allies and engage in long drawn out guerrilla operations which would perhaps end up in some disagreements among the Allies. He even feared a rumored organization of "werewolves," composed only of loyal followers of Hitler which would include boys and girls as well as adult fanatics, who would operate underground, and whose purpose "was murder and terrorism."<sup>1</sup>

The lurid reporting of this gigantic hoax is best represented perhaps by a quotation from the SHAFE Intelligence Summary of 11 March 1945: "Here [in the Bavarian mountains], defended by nature and by the most efficient secret weapons yet invented, the powers that have hitherto guided Germany will survive to reorganize her resurrection; here armaments will be manufactured in bomb-proof factories, food and equipment will be stored in vast underground caverns and a specially selected corps of young men will be trained in guerrilla warfare, so that a whole underground army can be fitted and directed to liberate Germany from the occupying forces." On 21 April 1945, General Bedell Smith, in a background briefing to the press in Paris, said, "We may find when we get down there [to the National Redoubt] a great deal more than anticipated; I am thinking we will. Our target now, if we are to bring this war to an end and bring it to an end in a hell of a hurry, is this National Redoubt and we are organizing our strength in that direction..."

---

<sup>1</sup> Eisenhower, Crusade in Europe, p. 397.

From a purely military standpoint...Berlin...doesn't have much significance anymore -- not anything comparable to that so-called National Redoubt."<sup>1</sup>

General Omar Bradley, a central participant in these events, reflected in his memoirs written down a few years later that, "the redoubt existed largely in the imagination of a few fanatic Nazis. It grew into so exaggerated a scheme that I am astonished we could have believed it as innocently as we did."<sup>2</sup>

The British were not taken in by this cock-and-bull story. Churchill recalled in his memoirs that on 17 March 1945 he directed General Ismay to have the British Intelligence Committee consider the possibility that Hitler, after losing Berlin and northern Germany would retire to the mountains of southern Germany and endeavor to prolong the fight there. Soon thereafter the Chiefs of Staff concluded that a prolonged German campaign, even of guerrilla character in the mountains, was unlikely on any serious scale; and the possibility of this was completely eliminated from serious consideration by the British from then on.<sup>3</sup>

#### E. BRITISH AND AMERICAN IDEAS ON THE VALUE OF BERLIN

Neither Churchill nor any of the other British advocates of a strategy to take Berlin made it an explicit point that the value of capturing Berlin included assurance of access, nor even, at this juncture, was it specified as a bargaining counter for any particular purpose. There is no evidence to suggest that anyone looked upon the capture of Berlin at that time in that particular light. It seems to have been, instead, a general feeling that it was simply ordinary foresight to be in possession of as much territory as possible -- specifically

---

<sup>1</sup>Smith, Defense of Berlin, pp. 37-38.

<sup>2</sup>A Soldier's Story (New York, 1951), p. 536.

<sup>3</sup>Triumph and Tragedy, p. 457.



including Berlin, Vienna, and Prague if possible -- at the time hostilities were concluded, because the more we had in hand when we came to the business of a peace settlement, the more we would have to say about what that settlement would be. In a message to Roosevelt on 1 April 1945 the Prime Minister expressed his view of these matters in these words: "There is moreover another aspect which it is proper for you and me to consider. The Russian armies will no doubt overrun all Austria and enter Vienna. If they also take Berlin will not their impression that they have been the overwhelming contributor to our common victory be unduly imprinted in their minds, and may this not lead them into a mood which will raise grave and formidable difficulties in the future? I therefore consider that from a political standpoint we should march as far east into Germany as possible and that should Berlin be in our grasp we should certainly take it. This also appears sound on military grounds."<sup>1</sup>

This kind of approach to strategic problems was rarely shared by Americans, military or civilian, who tended to consider that the sole goal of military operations was to defeat or destroy enemy military forces; and they regarded the introduction of political complications as an unwelcome distraction in the service of dubious values. Aware that we were pledged to withdraw from Berlin anyway, General Bradley described Berlin as a "prestige objective" [emphasis supplied], and as such he considered it not worth the casualties it would cost. Referring to the British concern for political considerations, he wrote in his memoirs, "As soldiers we looked naively on this British inclination to complicate the war with political foresight and non-military objectives" (which suggests that he had later had questioning afterthoughts).<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Triumph and Tragedy, p. 465.

<sup>2</sup>A Soldier's Story, pp. 535-536.

General Bedell Smith, Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, later wrote, in refutation of an accusation that the decision not to take Berlin resulted from a political agreement with the Russians, that:

There was no political consideration involved... General Eisenhower's decision to destroy the remaining enemy forces throughout Germany and, above all, to seal off the National Redoubt, was based on a realistic estimate of the military situation.<sup>1</sup>

In August of 1961 the State Department published a background pamphlet on the Berlin crisis, "Berlin-1961," which stated:

The Western Armies could have captured Berlin or at least joined in capturing it. But the Supreme Allied Commander, General Eisenhower, believed that they could be more usefully employed against the major German forces elsewhere. As a result the Soviets captured Berlin...

When interviewed by correspondents of the New York Times over the implication in this statement that his 1945 decision had been responsible for the current Berlin difficulties, ex-President Eisenhower showed no irritation. He acknowledged responsibility for the decision, which was a "tactical military decision."<sup>2</sup> The zones of occupation had previously been finally fixed by Allied political leaders, and for this reason the decision not to try to take Berlin was judged to be purely military.

The American view was epitomized a little later by the American soldier of that day who probably enjoyed more universal respect and admiration than any other. In commenting on a British suggestion that U.S. troops drive forward to seize Prague, General Marshall cabled Eisenhower:

---

<sup>1</sup>Walter Bedell Smith, Eisenhower's Six Great Decisions (New York, 1956), pp. 185-186.

<sup>2</sup>Cited by Smith, Defense of Berlin, p. 49.

Personally and aside from all logistic, tactical or strategic implications, I would be loathe to hazard American lives for purely political purposes.<sup>1</sup>

One might ask: What kinds of purposes did indeed justify the hazarding of American lives if political purposes did not? But such views were by no means confined to the military. Nowhere in Washington did there appear to be, at levels of high authority, an awareness of the political content of military strategy. The old hiatus continued to exist between military and political matters. Defeat of enemy forces was one thing, political settlement at the end of a war was another.

This was noted with deep regret by our British Allies, and was explained by Churchill as resulting in part from the tragic decline of the personal powers of President Roosevelt. In Churchill's words:

As a war waged by a coalition draws to its end political aspects have a mounting importance. In Washington especially, longer and wider views should have prevailed.... At this time the points at issue did not seem to the United States Chiefs of Staff to be of capital importance. They were of course unnoticed by and unknown to the public, and were all soon swamped, and for the time being effaced by the flowing tide of victory. Nevertheless, as will not now be disputed, they played a dominating part in the destiny of Europe, and may well have denied us all the lasting peace for which we had fought so long and hard. We can now see the deadly hiatus which existed between the fading of President Roosevelt's strength and the growth of President Truman's grip of the vast world problem. In this melancholy void one President could not act and the other could not know. Neither the military chiefs nor the State Department received the guidance they required. The former confined themselves to their professional spheres; the latter did not comprehend the issues involved. The indispensable political direction was lacking at the moment when it was most needed. The United States stood on the scene of victory, master of world fortunes, but without a true and coherent design.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Message W-74256, 28 April 1945, Marshall to Eisenhower, cited by Pogue, The Supreme Command, p. 468.

<sup>2</sup>Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 455-456.

**F. MILITARY RESOLUTION OF ISSUES THROUGH DEFAULT OF POLITICAL AUTHORITIES**

Ambassador Robert Murphy, who was General Eisenhower's Political Advisor during these events, later observed that Eisenhower was deeply convinced that military commanders should not usurp civilian functions, but that in the last months of the war he and his staff made several political decisions because the civilian officials responsible for American foreign policy -- the President and the Secretary of State -- did not choose to assert their authority.

The most important example was the decision not to try to capture Berlin, a decision of such international significance that no Army chief should have been required to make it. When the time came the entire responsibility was placed upon General Marshall, as Chief of Staff, and General Eisenhower, as Theater Commander. Both of these Army officers accepted this responsibility without complaint, then or afterward, but it was inevitable that they would regard Berlin from the military point of view.

As a matter of war strategy, the Eisenhower-Marshall decision was irreproachable, being based on careful consideration for saving the lives of American soldiers. According to SHAEF estimates, it would have cost from 10,000 to 100,000 American casualties to capture the German capital and the area surrounding it. These estimates proved wildly wrong, but that is beside the point. Eisenhower reasoned that, since Berlin lay deep inside the agreed Russian occupation zone, SHAEF forces would be obligated to evacuate the metropolitan district almost as soon as they could capture it, turning it over to Russian control. So the Anglo-American troops were directed toward Leipzig and the Red Army was left to seize Berlin -- with results which none of us foresaw.<sup>1</sup>

All of the evidence supports the Murphy interpretation that the decision was made on solely military grounds, by the military, because the highest American civilian officials judged that it was a military matter, to be delegated to the military and resolved by them solely on the basis of military criteria. The military who were involved were not totally

---

<sup>1</sup>Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors, p. 229.

unaware of the possible existence of pertinent political considerations. In the midst of these events Eisenhower informed Marshall, "I am the first to admit that a war is waged in pursuance of political aims. And if the CCS should decide that the Allied effort to take Berlin outweighs military considerations in this theater, I would cheerfully readjust my plans...." But it was in effect the ultimate American political authority that insisted this was primarily a military issue, to be resolved exclusively on military grounds. The political awareness of neither civilian nor military authorities was sufficiently sensitive, or sufficiently devious, to see beyond a very literal acceptance of the agreement that had been reached on zones of occupation.

#### G. THE MATTER OF ARRANGING OPERATIONAL CONTACT WITH THE RUSSIANS

Not long after the issue of whether or not to try to take Berlin had been resolved in the negative, Eisenhower decided that it would not be practical to confine military operations to the occupation zones delineated by the EAC Protocol. Rather, both sides should be free to advance as opportunity permitted until contact was made between the forces approaching each other from east and west. But this precipitated two problems. One was to minimize the chance of clashes between Red Army forces and forces of the Western Allies. The other was what to do, when forces of East and West finally met along a line that was not the agreed EAC demarcation line, with territory on one side of the agreed zonal line occupied by forces from the other side.

Eisenhower's original proposal for dealing with these matters went to the CCS on 5 April 1945, and included a provision which suggested that, with both sides free to advance until they made contact, when it was operationally appropriate both SHAEF and the Red Army command should be empowered to ask the other to retire on a local basis behind the East-West boundary set by the EAC Protocol. The British Chiefs opposed

this proposal, arguing that this was a matter to be decided by the governments concerned, and referred the matter to the Prime Minister. Churchill replied to the British Chiefs on 7 April complimenting them on sensing his interest in the issue, and gave them written policy guidance as follows:

When the forces arrive in contact, and after the preliminary salutations have been exchanged, they should rest opposite each other in these positions, except insofar as actual neighbouring military operations require concerted action. Thus, if we crossed the Elbe and advanced to Berlin, or on a line between Berlin and the Baltic, which is all well within the Russian zone, we should not give this up as a military matter. It is a matter of State to be considered between the three Governments, and in relation to what the Russians do in the south, where they will soon have occupied not only Vienna but all Austria. There cannot be such a hurry about our withdrawing from a place we have gained that the few days necessary for consulting the Governments in Washington and London cannot be found. I attach great importance to this, and could not agree to proposals of this kind [being decided] on a staff level. This must be referred to the President and me...<sup>1</sup>

There was no disposition anywhere in the American Government, however, to accept the Churchillian point of view, and there was no immediate settlement of these Anglo-American differences. But events were moving rapidly. The Western advance, and especially the American advance in Central Germany, was apparently at a faster pace than had been anticipated, which meant not only that the operational problem of making contact with the Russians was imminent, but also that a larger share of the Russian occupation zone would be in Allied hands than might have been expected earlier. (The Ninth Army crossed the Weser in force below Hannover on 6 April, reached Magdeburg - 53 miles from Berlin - on 11 April, and established bridgeheads on the right bank of the Elbe on 12 and 13 April.) Thus on 12 April -- the day of President Roosevelt's death -- the CCS

---

<sup>1</sup>Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 512-513.

approved a revised and restricted proposal for Eisenhower to communicate to the Russians through the Military Mission in Moscow. The gist of this was simply that, since prior agreement on demarcation of operational zones was not practical, each side should advance (as opposition permitted) until contact was imminent, at which juncture a division of responsibility between the approaching armies would be agreed upon by the local army group commanders. General Antonov, the Russian Chief of Staff, did not at first accept the proposal, his first reply being that it seemed to change the occupation zones previously agreed upon. Only after an exchange of messages, in which Eisenhower gave his assurances that he was referring only to operational -- i.e., tactical -- areas, and that upon completion of the tactical phase the Western forces would retire to the zone previously allocated to them by the EAC Protocol, did Antonov agree to the proposal.<sup>1</sup>

The problem of avoiding serious clashes between Red Army and Western Allies' forces remained, and was highlighted by several encounters in early April between U.S. and Russian planes. Roosevelt's death on 12 April resulted in a hiatus in American political policy making, partly because the new President had until then been kept remote from all matters of major strategy, and therefore lacked the background necessary for confident exercise of his own judgment and of the supreme Presidential authority. Agreements with the Russians for the purpose of avoiding the unwanted clashes involved not only identification signals, but more important, ad hoc agreements defining operational boundaries between the Red Army and Western forces. Inescapably, such agreements related to areas of Anglo-American policy differences, and had to be approved by the CCS (which involved Churchill) before Eisenhower could communicate with the Russians concerning them.

---

<sup>1</sup>Pogue, The Supreme Command, pp. 465-466; Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 512-513.

In the Anglo-American debate over this matter, Churchill finally addressed to President Truman a personal message in which he suggested, cautiously but unmistakably, not only that we hold on to the territory we captured until Russian intentions in Germany and Austria were clarified, but that we seek to pressure Russia into some amendment of the EAC zoning protocol favorable to the West by not relinquishing the territory until desired concessions are granted.

Prime Minister to President Truman

18 Apr 45

Your armies soon, and presently ours, may come into contact with the Soviet forces. The Supreme Commander should be given instructions by the CCS as soon as possible how to act.

In my view there are two zones:

(a) The tactical zone, in which our troops must stand on the line they have reached unless there is agreement for a better tactical deployment...This should be arranged by the Supreme Commander....

(b) The occupational zone, which I agreed with President Roosevelt on the advice of the Combined General Staffs [sic]. In my view this zone should be occupied within a certain time from V.E. Day, whenever this is declared, and we should retire with dignity from the much greater gains which the Allied troops have acquired by their audacity and vigor.

I am quite prepared to adhere to the occupational zones, but I do not wish our Allied troops or your American troops to be hustled back at any point by some crude assertion of a local Russian general. This must be provided against by an agreement between Governments so as to give Eisenhower a chance to settle on the spot in his own admirable way.

The occupational zones were decided rather hastily at Quebec in September 1944, when it was not foreseen that General Eisenhower's armies would make such a mighty in-road into Germany. The zones cannot be altered except by agreement with the Russians. But the moment V.E. Day has occurred we should try to set up the Allied Control Commission in Berlin and should insist upon a fair distribution of the food produced in Germany between all parts of Germany. As it stands at present the Russian occupational zone has the smallest proportion of people and grows by far the largest proportion of food, the Americans have not a very satisfactory proportion of food to conquered



population, and we poor British are to take over all the ruined Ruhr and large manufacturing districts, which are like ourselves, in normal times large importers of food. I suggest that this tiresome question should be settled in Berlin by the Allied Control Commission before we move from the tactical positions we have at present achieved .... [emphasis supplied]<sup>1</sup>

On this occasion, before there was a Presidential decision, the State Department and the pertinent Ambassador were consulted. Winant strongly opposed the suggestion to hold the "tactical zone" as a bargaining counter to get Soviet agreement on food supply, seeing such a move as a fatal blow to East-West confidence, and so advised the President. Truman's policy, it turned out, was to observe faithfully and to the letter, with steadfast honor, the agreements already entered into, and he so informed Churchill when he replied, on 21 April, in a message that has the marks of effective staff work, whether or not its policy was the most profitable one.

Zones of occupation for Germany were the subject of long and careful study and negotiation...formally agreed upon by the American, British, and Soviet Governments' just prior to the Yalta Conference.... The general area of the zone allotted to Russia was not in dispute and, in fact, was on general lines of a proposal informally advanced by the British as early as 1943.

The fact that the Russian zone contained the greater portion of German food-producing areas and that the zone sought and obtained by the British was a deficit area was well known throughout the negotiations. Formal acceptance by the three Governments of their zones of occupation was in no way made contingent upon the conclusion of satisfactory arrangements for an equitable distribution of German food resources.

A demand...for modification of agreed zone boundaries or for an agreement on more equitable food distribution might have serious consequences. The Russians could certainly consider such a bargaining position as a repudiation of our formal agreement.

---

<sup>1</sup> Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 514-515.

...Our State Department believes that every effort should be made through the Allied Control Commission to obtain a fair interzonal distribution of food produced in Germany but does not believe that the matter of retirement of our respective troops to our zonal frontiers should be used for such bargaining purposes.

The question of tactical deployment of American troops in Germany is a military one. It is my belief that General Eisenhower should be given certain latitude and discretion; and that when time permits, he should consult the CCS before any major withdrawal behind our zone frontiers....<sup>1</sup>

Following this exchange, the way was clear for Eisenhower to proceed to specific agreements to avoid clashes with the Red Army. Along with other arrangements, the Elbe-Mulde line was proposed by Eisenhower, and accepted by the Russians, as the operational boundary separating American and Russian forces in Central Germany. These arrangements were completed 21-23 April, and the first formal link-up of Soviet and Western forces occurred, at Torgaw on the Mulde River, on 26 April.<sup>2</sup>

In the last week of the war Eisenhower and Antonov made a series of ad hoc demarcations of tactical zones as Russians and Allied Forces moved rapidly toward a meeting all along the North-South line. In the most noteworthy of these arrangements, Eisenhower drove north to Luebeck to seal off the base of the Danish Peninsula from the Russians, and in so doing got Antonov to agree to stop the Red Army advance, along the south shore of the Baltic, at Wismar just east of Luebeck; in the south, in deference to Antonov's request, Eisenhower held his troops west of the Budejocce-Pilsen-Karlsbad line, thus allowing the Red Army to take Prague, although the British Chiefs strongly urged an American drive to seize the Czech capital.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Fleet Admiral William D. Leahy, I Was There (New York, 1950), pp. 349-350.

<sup>2</sup>Pogue, Supreme Command, p. 467.

<sup>3</sup>Pogue, The Supreme Command, pp. 467-469; "The Decision to Halt at the Elbe," pp. 489-491.

## V. THE DECISION TO RETIRE TO THE AGREED ZONES

The decision to retire to the agreed zones of occupation without first extracting fully explicit and highly specific guarantees of access to Berlin was very different from the two decisions leading up to it that we have already examined. The war in Europe was over, and this was clearly a political decision, recognized as such by all concerned. But it was an issue of political tactics rather than of political objectives: would we exploit, or not, our temporary tactical possession of areas we had agreed to turn over to the Russians for occupation, to extract from them explicit and specific guarantees of Berlin access (or other conduct favorable to our interests).

When hostilities ended on 7 May 1945, forces of the Western Allies had advanced eastward to a line roughly from Wismar on the Baltic to Schwerin thence south to the Elbe, thence on the left bank of the Elbe to a point about 25 km north of Chemnitz where it crossed to the right bank of the Elbe and passed to the west of that city, thence south and southeastward through the Erzgebirge and thence southeastward through western Czechoslovakia (to the east of the city of Pilzen), thence into western Austria past Linz, before the line broke sharply west to take in Berchtesgaden on the Bavarian-Austrian border and then Innsbruck and the Brenner Pass. Western forces were thus in possession of more than one third of that area of Germany agreed upon for Russian occupation (see Figure 2).

The Nazi government had been overthrown, and all governmental authority had passed to the occupying powers with the signing on May 7 at Reims of the Act of Military Surrender and



UNCLASSIFIED

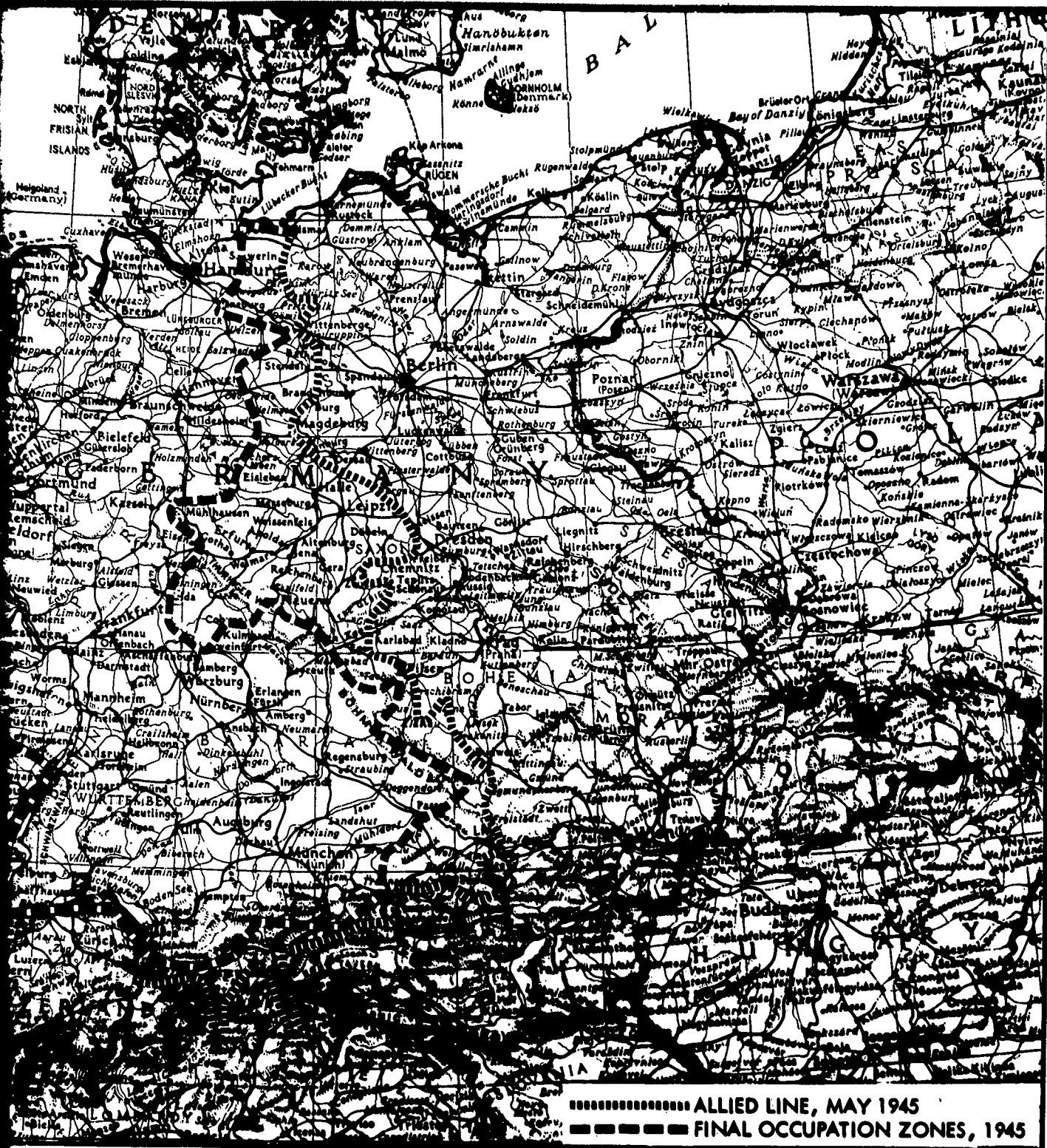


FIGURE 2. Allied Lines on May 7, 1945 and the Agreed Occupational Zonal Boundaries

2-21-66-1

B

UNCLASSIFIED

the signing the next day, in Berlin, of an amplified version of that instrument of unconditional surrender. The most basic principles of a four-power occupation government of Germany had been agreed upon among the victors. There was urgent need to get an effective occupation administration under way, but neither the command structure as it then existed nor the location of the forces of the occupying nations corresponded to what had been agreed upon. Before an effective occupation administration could be established, the four-power occupation administration that had been agreed upon in principle needed to be established in fact, and the forces of the occupying powers needed to move in some cases from the tactical zones in which they were located to the occupation zones that had been agreed upon.

A. CHURCHILL SEEKS TO EXPLOIT TACTICAL POSITION OF WESTERN FORCES

In this situation, Churchill was motivated primarily by his suspicions of what Soviet intentions might be, both in Germany and all along the line in eastern and central Europe that marked the historic meeting ground of Teutonic and Slavic power, and he wished to exploit our favorable position in Germany as much as possible to counter Russian ambitions in these areas. He wanted the structure of European settlement made while the West still was in possession of all of the lands it had occupied and still had its maximum military forces in being and on the spot.

President Truman, on the other hand (reflecting the judgment of his advisors probably, because he was so new to so much of what he had to be responsible for), was inclined to discount Churchill's suspicions of Russia. Moreover, he felt under pressure to reduce the American commitment in Germany as rapidly as possible in order to shift the main weight of American effort to the Pacific. In addition, political pressure was building up in the USA for the return home of the boys who had been overseas in combat.

So it was that, less than a week after the Nazi surrender, Churchill renewed his earlier effort to persuade Truman to use the leverage of a continuing, formidable American military presence in Germany to influence the peace settlement in Europe. The gist of the Churchillian proposal was contained in what has become known as "The Iron Curtain" telegram of 12 May 1945 to President Truman.

I am profoundly concerned about the European situation. I learn that half the American Air Force in Europe has already begun to move to the Pacific Theatre. The newspapers are full of the great movements of the American armies out of Europe. Our armies also are, under previous arrangements, likely to undergo a marked reduction. The Canadian Army will certainly leave. The French are weak and difficult to deal with. Anyone can see that in a very short space of time our armed power on the Continent will have vanished, except for moderate forces to hold down Germany.

Meanwhile what is to happen about Russia? I have always worked for friendship with Russia, but, like you, I feel deep anxiety because of their misinterpretation of the Yalta decisions, their attitude towards Poland, their overwhelming influence in the Balkans, excepting Greece, the difficulties they make about Vienna, the combination of Russian power and the territories under their control or occupied, coupled with the Communist technique in so many other countries, and above all their power to maintain very large armies in the field for a long time. What will be the position in a year or two, when the British and American Armies have melted and the French have not yet been formed on any major scale, when we may have a handful of divisions, mostly French, and when Russia may choose to keep two or three hundred on active service?

An iron curtain is being drawn down upon their front. We do not know what is going on behind. There seems little doubt that the whole of the regions east of the line Luebeck-Trieste-Corfu will soon be completely in their hands. To this must be added the further enormous area conquered by the American armies between Eisenach and the Elbe, which will, I suppose, in a few weeks be occupied, when the Americans retreat, by the Russian power. All kinds of arrangements will have to be made by General Eisenhower to prevent another immense flight of the German population westward as this enormous muscovite advance into the centre of Europe takes place. And then the curtain will descend again to a very large extent, if not entirely.

Meanwhile the attention of our peoples will be occupied in inflicting severities upon Germany, which is ruined and prostrate, and it would be open to the Russians in a very short time to advance if they chose to the waters of the North Sea and the Atlantic.

Surely it is vital now to come to an understanding with Russia, or see where we are with her, before we weaken our armies mortally or retire to the zones of occupation. This can only be done by a personal meeting. I should be most grateful for your opinion and advice. Of course we may take the view that Russia will behave impeccably, and no doubt that offers the most convenient solution. To sum up, this issue of a settlement with Russia before our strength has gone seems to me to dwarf all others.  
[Emphasis supplied.]<sup>1</sup>

#### B. TRUMAN'S FIRST REBUFF OF CHURCHILL'S PROPOSAL

To the specific proposal of an early meeting with Stalin, for the purpose of reaching critical agreements before any withdrawal or weakening of Western forces occurred, Truman replied that a meeting with Stalin was premature, that American forces would be withdrawn from the Soviet zone when military convenience made it advisable, and that it was better not to risk a final rupture with Stalin without first learning more about the real objectives of Soviet policies. To serve this last purpose, Harry Hopkins would go to Moscow to discuss with Stalin the differences that had arisen since Yalta.

#### C. HOPKINS TO MOSCOW

The idea of sending Hopkins to Moscow to talk to Stalin seems to have occurred first to Charles E. Bohlen and to the then Ambassador to Russia Averell Harriman, at about the same time Churchill was importuning Truman as a result of an impasse over voting procedures in the U.N., and the admission of Argentina, at the San Francisco Conference.

When Harriman and Bohlen proposed the Hopkins visit to Moscow because of difficulties evident to them at San Francisco,

---

<sup>1</sup>Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 572-574.



President Truman promptly agreed, no doubt motivated also by the strong suggestions being made by Churchill; and plans were immediately laid for Hopkins to depart on 23 May.

He arrived in Moscow on 25 May, and had six meetings with Stalin from 26 May to 6 June, in which there was an exchange of views on all the main issues that had arisen between Russia and the Western powers. Ambassador Harriman and Bohlen (as translator) accompanied Hopkins, and Stalin had at his side Molotov and a translator. Each meeting was followed by a lengthy cable report to Washington, and Churchill was kept promptly informed.

The talks centered upon the general deterioration of relations between the U.S. and the USSR, at one time or another dealing with most of the specific issues related to that deterioration, but the subject of the provisional government of Poland always was the most important. Interestingly enough, neither occupation zones in Germany nor access to Berlin is mentioned anywhere in the available records of these talks as a subject of discussion. The talks were forthright, generally friendly in tone, suggesting that some differences were more misunderstanding than anything else, and at the end Stalin agreed to issue an invitation to M. Mikolajczyk, former Polish Prime Minister and head of the Polish Peasants' Party, favored by the British and previously resisted by the Russians, to join the Polish Provisional government. On the whole, the talks were considered a great success in easing the growing tension between Russia and the Western Allies, and caused much temporary relief in Washington and London. A meeting between the Big Three was tentatively agreed upon to take place in Potsdam about 15 July -- later than Churchill wished, but he could do nothing but agree.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 885-912; Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 581-584; Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, pp. 61-64.

#### D. HOPKINS TRANSMITS EISENHOWER VIEWS TO TRUMAN

Returning to Washington, Hopkins stopped at Frankfurt for talks with Eisenhower on 8 June, and there, for the first time, the problems of the German occupation came before him. While Hopkins was in Moscow, Eisenhower had recommended the dissolution of SHAEF, as inappropriate to the administration of the occupation, the assumption of responsibilities for each of the agreed zones of occupation by the appropriate national commander-in-chief, and the activation of the four-power Control Council called for by the EAC agreements. The British had of course opposed this, but did consent to a meeting in Berlin of the four commanders-in-chief, for the nominal purpose of signing three instruments prepared by the EAC, one announcing assumption of supreme authority, another expressing again the zonal arrangements already agreed to, and the third authorizing establishment of previously agreed upon control machinery, including the Allied Control Council, from which all governing authority of the occupying nations derived. After these formalities had been attended to, Eisenhower proposed to Zhukov the establishment of the Control Council, but Zhukov demurred, saying this could not be done until western troops were removed from the Soviet zones. This impasse had been foreseen by Eisenhower, who on 2 June had vainly sought, in preparation for the meeting to get a decision in advance on a date for withdrawal, but had been told the withdrawal should be decided on a military basis by the Control Council.<sup>1</sup> Thus, when Hopkins reached Frankfurt three days later, he found Eisenhower understandably anxious to bring an end to the state of indecision which rendered orderly administration of the areas agreed upon for occupation impossible.

---

<sup>1</sup>Lucius D. Clay, Decision in Germany (Garden City, N.Y., 1950), pp. 20-23; Smith, Defense of Berlin, pp. 72-77; Herbert Feis, Between War and Peace - The Potsdam Conference (Princeton, 1964), pp. 140-141.

Following his conversations with Eisenhower on 8 June, Hopkins reported to President Truman that Eisenhower believed we should bring an end to the Russian uncertainty about our withdrawal from the Russian zone in order to get the Control Council established and functioning. In conveying this message, Hopkins suggested that in connection with arrangements for withdrawal from the Russian zone we should get Soviet agreement on several related actions, including entrance of Western troops into Berlin at the same time, and guarantee of air, rail and road access to Berlin on agreed routes, plus settlement of remaining differences over Austria and Vienna.<sup>1</sup>

#### E. CHURCHILL RENEWS CAMPAIGN TO DELAY WITHDRAWAL

Meanwhile Churchill continued to urge Truman to defer decision on withdrawal from the Soviet zone, although he had yielded to the later date for the meeting of the Big Three. On 9 June he cabled, this time about difficulties with the Russians concerning Marshal Tolbukin's obstructive actions in Vienna,

Would it not be better to refuse to withdraw in the main European front until a settlement has been reached about Austria? Surely at the very least the whole agreement about zones should be carried out at the same time?

---

<sup>1</sup>Feis, Between War and Peace, pp. 142-143; Truman, Year of Decisions, pp. 302-303. The evidence does not make clear whose idea it was to attach entry to Berlin and access guarantees to withdrawal from the Soviet zones, though it seems obvious enough and was perhaps in the minds of all of those who discussed the subject in Frankfurt. Probably these included, besides Eisenhower and Hopkins, General Bedell Smith, General Clay, and Ambassador Murphy. While in Frankfurt, Hopkins was under pressure from Churchill to stop in London en route home. It is a revealing commentary on the state of Anglo-Russian-American relations at that time that Hopkins felt it would be politically unwise to do so. (Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 913.)

And on 11 June he notified the Foreign Office, Eden then being in Washington, that he was "still hoping that the retreat of the American centre to the occupation line can be staved off till 'The Three' meet...."<sup>1</sup>

On 12 June, the day Hopkins arrived in Washington after a stop en route in Paris, Truman made his decision. He sent a message that day to Churchill saying that he found it unwise to delay the withdrawal of American troops from the Soviet zone for political purposes because the Allied Control Council could not begin to function until Allied troops withdrew and because postponement of withdrawal would be disadvantageous to relations with the Soviets. He enclosed a draft message to Stalin, which he proposed to send after he received Churchill's concurrence. The important portion of the message to Stalin was:

As to Germany, I am ready to have instructions issued to all American troops to begin withdrawal into their own zone on 21 June in accordance with arrangements between the respective commanders, including in these arrangements simultaneous movement of the national garrisons into Greater Berlin and provision of free access by air, road, and rail from Frankfurt and Bremen to Berlin for U.S. forces....

On 14 June, Churchill reluctantly agreed, mainly because he had no alternative. His reply suggested no change except the addition of a paragraph asking for simultaneous redistribution of national garrisons into agreed occupation zones in Austria and Vienna and establishment of the Allied Control Commission for Austria. The proposed telegram, with the amendment suggested by Churchill, went out from Washington that day, and on the following day, 15 June 1945, the Prime Minister advised Stalin of his concurrence in these actions and that he had issued corresponding instructions to Marshal Montgomery.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 603-604.

<sup>2</sup>Truman, Year of Decision, p. 302-303; Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 604-606; Smith, Defense of Berlin, pp. 78-79.

Several aspects, mostly informal, of this penultimate act of decision by the President should be noted. Although the decision was recognized to be political in nature, and taken for reasons that were political, the two principal continuing advisors whom the President depended upon at that time were General Marshall and Admiral Leahy. The message to Stalin was written by General Marshall, and, most important perhaps, the definition of the arrangements was left to respective local military commanders -- to the operational level. This was the case, despite the fact that Hopkins had emphasized to Eisenhower while in Frankfurt, (where the latter expressed hope the governments would delegate sufficient power to commanders to make the Control Commission work) that,

...I was sure that the Russian Government intended to control General Zhukov completely and repeated the story of Vyshinski being in Zhukov's ear all during our conversation in Berlin. Eisenhower told me the same thing had happened to him the day before. Zhukov had seemed unwilling to reply to any of his questions without first consulting Vyshinski.<sup>1</sup>

There was very little State Department participation. James F. Byrnes had been chosen by Truman to replace Stettinius who had been Secretary of State only half a year, but Byrnes was not formally appointed to office until 3 July; neither one played any discernible role in the matter. The most important civilian advisors on this matter at this time were probably Hopkins, and Mr. Joseph Davies, former Ambassador to Russia, whom Truman sent to London to talk to Churchill about the prospective Big Three meeting (not a very happy choice, as it turned out) while Hopkins was in Moscow.<sup>2</sup> President Truman, then in office only two months, was beset by opposing advices:

<sup>1</sup>Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 913-914.

<sup>2</sup>Leahy, I Was There, pp. 378-382; Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, pp. 576-580. Davies represented to Truman on his return from London that Churchill was extremely emotional and vehement in his antagonism to the Russians; Churchill was not favorably impressed by Davies.

Churchill vehemently suspicious of Stalin and the Russians, and Hopkins and Davies, both friendly, on the whole, to the Russians. Truman's military advisors were by no means anti-Russian on the issues: Leahy, Marshall, and Eisenhower all opposed the Churchillian line at that time. The American Embassy in London which had long been assigned, on paper, direct responsibilities in matters pertaining to the occupation, was not informed of the exchange of telegrams between Truman and Churchill until the deed was done, if Philip Mosely's memory is correct.<sup>1</sup>

#### F. THE LAST PHASE -- AGREEMENTS ON MOVEMENTS OF TROOPS

To the considerable surprise of Washington and London, Stalin's reply to the proposed withdrawal, which came on 16 June, asked for a delay until 1 July, on the basis of an unconvincing excuse -- mainly that mines remained to be cleared from streets (that has been interpreted to cover up Soviet removal of capital equipment and other reparations from what was to become the Western sectors of the city). Stalin's message said nothing fully explicit in reply to the stipulation in Truman's proposal about simultaneous provision of access, fuzzing this matter over with the words, "on our part all necessary measures will be taken...in accordance with the above stated policies." But nothing "above" had been stated except that entry of troops to Berlin might begin on 1 July. No great attention was paid to this lacuna, however, and on 18 June Truman cabled Stalin that he had issued instructions to begin the troop movements on 1 July. Truman explained in his memoir that his intention was to carry out faithfully the agreements entered into by Roosevelt, understanding that the purpose was to set up a joint three-power occupation of Germany. The role of a sense of honor in this decision should not be minimized.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Mosely, "Occupation of Germany: New Light on How the Zones Were Drawn," pp. 187-188.

<sup>2</sup>Truman, Year of Decision, pp. 304-306.

In conveying the President's orders to Eisenhower (and McNarney, who was to replace him) on 25 June, General Marshall stressed that arrangements for access to Berlin should be made with the Russian commanders simultaneously with arrangements for withdrawal from the Soviet zones. He assumed, he said, that the appropriate Soviet commanders had been authorized to make these arrangements; but to be sure of this he directed General Deane, in Moscow, to check on the point with General Antonov. There was some confusion here in our communication channels because we handled the matter as military while the Russians put it into diplomatic channels at the Moscow end. Antonov referred Deane's inquiry to Vyshinsky, who later in the day told Ambassador Harriman that Zhukov was authorized to discuss the matter of access with Eisenhower. But Antonov did not get the answer to Deane until two days later, and Marshall was waiting for a reply from Deane. When it came, Antonov suggested a meeting in Berlin with Zhukov on 29 June.<sup>1</sup>

General Lucius D. Clay, as Deputy Military Governor, represented General Eisenhower in the meeting in Berlin with Zhukov, accompanied by Major General Floyd Parks, who was to be the first U.S. Commandant in Berlin. British General Weeks was also there, acting in the same capacity on behalf of Field Marshal Montgomery. The discussion centered upon arrangements for the withdrawal of Allied troops from the Soviet zone, and the move to Berlin. They took up first the rate of withdrawal from the Soviet zone, and other details such as displaced persons left behind. After these matters were disposed of and there had been agreement on the size of the garrisons in Berlin, and the timing of the move, they turned to matters not so easy to resolve.

---

<sup>1</sup>Truman, Year of Decision, pp. 306-307; Smith, Defense of Berlin, pp. 81-82.

We [Clay and Weeks] had explained our intent to move into Berlin utilizing three rail lines and two highways and such air space as we needed. Zhukov would not recognize that these routes were essential and pointed out that the demobilization of Soviet forces was taxing existing facilities. I countered that we were not demanding exclusive use of these routes but merely access over them without restrictions other than the normal traffic control and regulations which the Soviet administration would establish for its own use. General Weeks supported my contention strongly. We both knew there was no provision covering access to Berlin in the agreement reached by the European Advisory Commission. We did not wish to accept specific routes which might be interpreted as a denial of our right of access over all routes but there was merit in the Soviet contention that existing routes were needed for demobilization purposes. We had already found transport a bottleneck in our own redeployment. Therefore Weeks and I accepted as a temporary arrangement the allocation of a main highway and rail line and two air corridors, reserving the right to reopen the question in the Allied Control Council. I must admit that we did not then fully realize that the requirement of unanimous consent would enable a Soviet veto in the Allied Control Council to block all of our future efforts.

Reflecting on this five years later, General Clay wrote:

I think now I was mistaken in not at that time making free access to Berlin a condition to our withdrawal into our occupation zone. The import of the issue was not recognized but I did not want an agreement in writing which established anything less than the right of unrestricted access. We were sincere in our desire to move into Berlin for the purpose of establishing a quadripartite government, which we hoped would develop better understanding and solve many problems. Also we had a large and combat-experienced army in Germany which at the moment prevented us from having any worries over the possibility of being blockaded there. However, I doubt very much if anything in writing would have done any more to prevent the events which took place [the 1948-49 Berlin Blockade] than the verbal agreement which we made. The Soviet Government seems able to find technical reasons at will to justify the violation of understanding whether verbal or written....<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Lucius D. Clay, Decision in Germany, pp. 25-26.



With this agreement on 29 June 1945, and the movements it authorized beginning two days later, the deed was first formalized and then accomplished. But in the sense of being rendered inevitable, the issue had probably been decided long before. Committed as we were to honor completely and in generous spirit the full letter of the pledges we had given, we had probably given away our future options in the preliminary understandings we had subscribed to even before we signed the EAC agreement. And we had signed an indeterminate mortgage on future policies not too long after the war started, when we gave operations precedence over long-term plans. This concentration upon present needs and circumstances prevented those in ultimate control of things from considering that when current needs were met and the current situation dealt with, we would face very different needs and an entirely new kind of situation. Our British and Russian Allies, and a few Americans at staff levels, demonstrably were aware of this consideration. But those at American national command authority levels obviously were not aware, and were not within earshot of those Americans at the lower echelons who were.

## VI. SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS

In the World War II era, our processes of strategic policy formulation and decision making with respect to arrangements for the occupation of Germany and Berlin were severely handicapped by both doctrinal and procedural difficulties.

- There was repeated failure to achieve coordination of the political and military aspects both in problems of strategic policy in which there was ample opportunity for bureaucratic processes to operate regularly and in occasional operational decisions which had to be resolved very quickly and on an ad hoc basis.
- Different U.S. agencies working at the same or related problems often failed to cooperate and sometimes even worked at cross purposes.
- The high command level often rendered its policy determinations and strategic decisions without utilizing the skills, the assembled information, and pertinent studies especially provided at staff levels for the very purpose of assisting that function; sometimes the high command level failed to provide supporting echelons with sufficient information concerning its policies, perspectives, and acts and decisions, to enable the supporting echelons to discharge effectively their assigned responsibilities.
- Longer term goals and indirect political effects were sometimes sacrificed to the expediency of letting things be decided entirely on the basis of operational requirements

Generally, high-level attention was riveted exclusively upon the immediate situation, with attention to more remote matters postponed until these practical concerns had been duly dispatched most commonly because of insensitivity to the long-term effects and indirect political consequences of technical and operational expedients. ^

Our attention to these factors in this particular 1941-1945 experience arises not just because these things happened in this

particular way then, but also because our acquaintance with national security policy formulation and decision making in other, more recent situations had already identified comparable problems in the later experience. This suggests that problems of this sort, although varying greatly in importance and prominence from occasion to occasion, are characteristic of the high command and high policy formulation process, and may be expected more or less universally to present themselves as obstacles that will always have to be anticipated and dealt with. Because this study relates to only one set of experiences we will not belabor the generality as such. But because on other grounds we know the generality to have some merit, we will elaborate slightly, with respect to this particular case, on the four observations stated summarily in the preceding paragraph.

The difficulties and deficiencies to which these observations refer are by no means mutually exclusive. On the contrary, the first three may be fairly regarded as, in large measure, slightly varying manifestations of a single basic problem. This is the problem of being acutely sensitive and wisely discriminating in perception of both the political and the military content in strategic policies and operational plans, and of devising administrative procedures that, without losing efficiency from a military point of view, will be responsive to the frequently divergent and even conflicting nature of the political factors.

Major reasons why this persistent problem was not dealt with more effectively in the 1941-1945 period appear to be the general doctrinal acceptance then of the separation of political and military matters, and the corresponding organizational segregation of military and political planning that restricted almost all coordination of military and political inputs to strategic questions to the highest national level. The doctrinal aspect tended to blind us to the political content and

to the long-range and indirect political effects of military operations. The organizational segregation resulted in a very restrictive limitation upon the policy coordination process at the top of the administrative pyramid. This point is simply too late in the decision process to take all pertinent considerations into account, because coordination of such matters, if it is to be effected knowledgeably, has to begin with degrees of detail far below those that the national level decision makers could afford to give time to.

The frequent failure of the highest echelon to utilize staff capabilities or to keep the staff properly informed, and the frequent bypassing of officials and echelons in matters for which they held assigned responsibility, was in part a reflection of the personality and operating style of the President himself, and in part a reflection of the domestic political circumstances then prevailing, especially those centering around the office of the Secretary of State. However, it is a reasonable judgment that even these problems of personal style and domestic political inhibitions would have been less costly if we had entered the war both more doctrinally ready to perceive the inherently single nature of war and politics, and organizationally prepared to coordinate political and military aspects of national security problems very broadly, beginning at those staff echelons where substantive details were known with the fullest degree of expertness.